

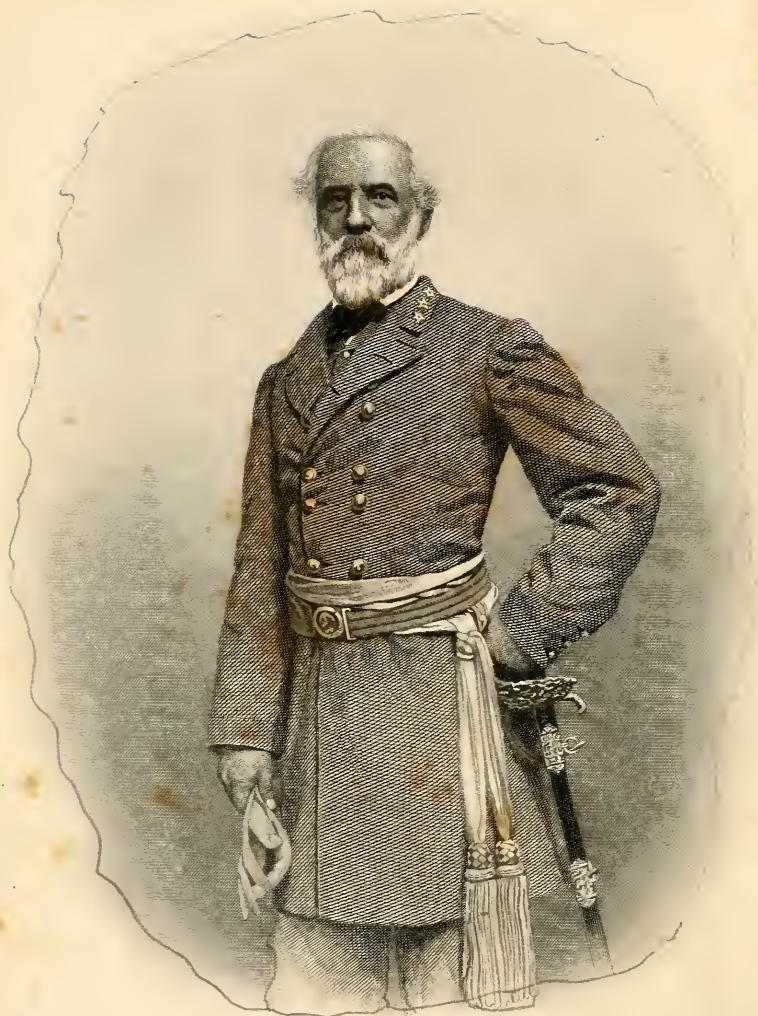






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R. E. Lee

LIFE
AND CAMPAIGNS
OF
GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE.

BY
JAMES D. McCABE, JR.

WITH STEEL PLATE AND MAPS.



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P R E F A C E .

I HAVE been led to the preparation of this work by a desire to collect in a useful and convenient form a history of the achievements of the great soldier, recently at the head of the armies of the South; and as he is endeared to his countrymen chiefly by his connection with them in the gallant struggle which has just closed, I have devoted the greater part of these pages to that portion of his life, passing over the preceding with as little delay as possible.

I have brought to the execution of this task a sincere desire to lay aside the feelings engendered by four years of war, and to investigate fully, and discuss impartially and truthfully, the topics that are presented in this volume. I have spared no pains to render my sources of information as complete as possible. In May 1861, I commenced to collect such papers and documents, both official and unofficial, relating to the war, as I could procure. To this task, begun for a purpose not altogether different from that to which I have now applied it, I devoted the entire period of the war, and was aided in it by many members of the various branches of the Confederate Government and of the army. In this way I secured an extensive and valuable collection of materials for a history of the war, or biographies of the individuals connected with it; a collection embracing over fifteen thousand papers of all kinds, to which, through the kindness of friends, I have been able to add many valuable maps and charts. Since the close of the war I have greatly enlarged this list by the addition of the reports and official papers of the United States Commanders and Govern-

ment. These sources of information, to which I may add a personal observation of the greater part of the war, have enabled me to make my book more complete than it would have been had my material been less extensive. I have also derived much assistance from the very valuable work by Mr. William Swinton, entitled "*The Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac.*"

I have sought to present a fair and dispassionate narrative of the events of the late war, to praise where praise was due, and censure where I thought it deserved. It is for my readers to decide whether I have succeeded or failed, but I trust that, whatever may be their decision, they will at least do me the justice to believe that I have recognized the responsibility of the task I have undertaken, and have honestly tried to do my duty.

I take this opportunity of returning my thanks to the friends who have aided me in the collection of materials; to Mr. S. W. Clifford, of Boston, for valuable maps received from him; and to the publishers for the generous and constant encouragement they have held out to me since the enterprise was begun.

J. D. McC. JR.

September 22, 1866.

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LIFE AND CAMPAIGNS

OF

GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE.

I.

EARLY LIFE.

I.

THE LEE FAMILY.

THIS family, which has given so many great men to America, is of ancient and honorable descent. As early as the year 1333, we are informed by an old manuscript,* that Johes de Lee, a soldier, received lands from one Hugo de Hinton. The son of this Johes de Lee was Robertus de la Lee, and he married Margarita, daughter and heiress of Thomas Astley, of Nordley, about the year 1400. Later still, we find the name of Thomas Lee, of Cotton, in King's Nordley, in the Parish of Alvely, who was the son of Johannes Lee.†

Later still, in the reign of Charles I, of England, the Lee Family were located in the County of Shropshire, and were of

* This MS. is written in Latin, and its authenticity is well established. The pedigree which it contains was extracted from the London Tower, and is certified by Charles Townley, York, and John Pomfret, Rouge Croix, August 1, 1750.

† The Pedigree of the Lee Family. Published in the *Richmond Dispatch*, January 7, 1865.

the Cavalier stock. One of these, Richard Lee, a gentleman of good position and many accomplishments, determined to emigrate to the New World, concerning which such marvelous tales were being told in the mother country. Bishop Meade says of him, "He was a man of good stature, comely visage, enterprising genius, a sound head, vigorous spirit, and generous nature. When he got to Virginia, which at that time was not much cultivated, he was so pleased with the country that he made large settlements there with the servants he carried over." He came to the colony as Secretary, and member of the King's Privy Council. He made several voyages back to England, and finally settled in that part of Virginia lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, known as the Northern Neck. He was for a long time the Secretary of the Colony, under Sir William Berkeley, and exercised a marked influence upon the course which it pursued in the great Revolution which made Cromwell master of England. Lee was a thorough royalist, and, together with the Governor, held the colony firm in its allegiance to "Charlie over the water." He was prominent in negotiating the treaty between Virginia and the Commonwealth of England, which was so honorable to the colony, and which recognized it as an independent State, and on the death of Cromwell, he induced Governor Berkeley to have Charles II proclaimed "King of England, Scotland, France, Ireland, and Virginia," two years before the Restoration. In consequence of this step, the ancient motto of Virginia was, "*En dat Virginia quintam*," changed after the union of England and Scotland to "*En dat Virginia quartam*."

Richard Lee died, and was buried in Virginia. He left two sons, John and Richard. John was educated at Oxford, and was so accomplished that he was offered a fine opening in the Church, with the prospect of an advancement; but the offer was declined, as it was his father's wish that he should settle in Virginia. He died before his father.

Richard Lee, the son, was a man of great learning. He passed his life in study, writing his notes habitually in Greek, Hebrew, or Latin. Some of these are now preserved in Virginia. He was a member of the Council, and held other posts of honor and emolument. He married a Miss Corbin, of England, and died about the year 1690, leaving five sons, Richard, Philip, Francis, Thomas, Henry, and one daughter, who married William Fitzhugh, of Eagle's Nest, King George County, Virginia.

Of the sons, Richard, the eldest, went to England, as a Virginia merchant, and became the partner of his maternal uncle, Thomas Corbin. He married in England, and had three children, one son and two daughters, who came back to Virginia. Philip Lee, the second son, settled in Maryland, and left a numerous progeny. Francis, the third son, died a bachelor; Thomas, the fourth son, married Miss Hannah Ludwell, a lady of fine family. The fifth son, Henry Lee, I will notice further on.

Thomas Lee, the fourth son of Richard Lee, was, in many respects, a remarkable man. By his marriage he allied himself with the Ludwells and the Grymes, two wealthy and influential families. He was a man of much learning, the greater part of which he taught himself, and eventually, though a younger son, became possessed of a large fortune. He soon acquired a leading position in the colony, and was made President of the Council, which post he held many years, until his death. He became impressed at an early day with the idea that the western part of the colony would be settled at some future time by a thriving community, and employed an engineer of note to explore the lands in that section, especially those bordering the Ohio River. While President of the Council, he declared to a friend that the colonies would, of necessity, eventually be independent of Great Britain, and predicted that

“the seat of Government would be located near the Little Falls of the Potomac River,” where he soon after acquired large tracts of land, which were, within the present century, the property of his descendants. He resided at Stratford, but his mansion was destroyed by fire. He at once set about rebuilding it, and so greatly was he esteemed in the colony and in England, that the Government and merchants alike, and, it is said, even Queen Caroline, contributed to defray the cost of the structure. Of this edifice Mr. Lossing says, “There is no structure in our country to compare with it. The walls of the first story are two and a half feet thick, and the second story two feet, composed of brick imported from England. It originally contained about one hundred rooms. Besides the main building, there are four offices, one at each corner, containing fifteen rooms. The stables are capable of accommodating one hundred horses. Its cost was about \$80,000.” *

Thomas Lee died in 1750, and left six sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Philip Ludwell Lee, married a Miss Steptoe, and by her had two daughters, of whom Matilda, the elder, married her second cousin, Colonel Henry Lee, (the father of General R. E. Lee.)

The second son of Thomas Lee was Thomas Ludwell Lee. The third son was Richard Henry Lee, the great champion of American Independence. He was born on the 21st of January, 1732, and died June 19, 1794. He it was who on the 7th of June, 1776, offered, in the Continental Congress, the famous resolution, “that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.” The fourth son of Thomas Lee was

* Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution. Part II, p. 217.

Francis Lightfoot Lee, born October 14, 1734, died in April, 1797. He was, like his brother, Richard Henry, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The fifth son was William Lee, who settled in London. The sixth son was Arthur Lee, who, says Bishop Meade, "as a scholar, a writer, a philosopher, a politician, and a diplomatist, was surpassed by none, and equalled by few, of his contemporaries. The services rendered by him to his country, as her minister, at foreign courts, were most valuable."

I must now return to Henry Lee, the fifth son of Richard Lee, the ancestor of the subject of this memoir. He married a Miss Bland, and had several children. His third son, Henry, married a Miss Grymes, and by her had five sons and three daughters, viz., Henry, the famous soldier of the Revolution, Charles, Richard Bland, Theodoric and Edmund, and Mary, Lucy, and Anne.

Henry Lee, the eldest son, was born January 29, 1756. He was educated at first by a private tutor at home, and then sent to Princeton College, then under the charge of Doctor Witherspoon, where he graduated in 1774. In 1776 Patrick Henry nominated him to the command of a cavalry company raised in Virginia, for service in the Continental army, under the general command of Colonel Bland. In 1777 Lee's corps was placed under Washington's immediate control, and under the energetic leadership of its young captain, acquired a high reputation for discipline and efficiency. Lee was made a Major, and his legion performed many daring exploits. In July 1779, he captured a British fort at Paulus Hook, (Jersey City,) for which he received from Congress, the thanks of that body, and a gold medal. In November 1780, he was made Lieutenant-Colonel, and early in 1781 joined General Greene in the Carolinas, where he increased his already brilliant renown.

About the beginning of 1782, after the battle of Eutaw

Springs, Colonel Lee returned to Virginia, and married his second cousin, Matilda, daughter of Philip Ludwell Lee, Esq., of Stratford, where he resided with his father-in-law. In 1786 he was elected to a seat in Congress. In 1791 he was chosen Governor of Virginia. In 1794 he was appointed by Washington, his warm friend and admirer, to command the troops sent to quell the Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania. In 1799 he was a member of Congress, and was chosen by that body to pronounce a funeral oration on the death of Washington, in the House of Representatives. He prepared the oration, but being imperatively called away, it was delivered by his friend, Judge Marshall. In 1801 General Henry Lee retired to private life, being much straitened in his pecuniary resources. His first wife having died, he married again — this time, Anne, daughter of Charles Carter of Shirley (on James River, opposite City Point). In 1809 he wrote his *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department*, which is justly regarded as a model work of its kind. In 1814 he was seriously wounded while endeavoring to put down a riot in Baltimore, and from the injury thus received, he never recovered. In 1817 he went to the West Indies for his health, but failing to find relief there, returned home. On his way to Virginia, he stopped on the coast of Georgia, to visit Mrs. Shaw, a daughter of his friend, General Greene, and there died on the 25th of March 1818, at the age of 62 years.

General Henry Lee had four sons and three daughters. His first wife bore him Henry Lee, noted for his literary abilities, and a daughter, Lucy; and his second wife bore him Charles Carter, *Robert Edward*, and Sidney Smith, (Commodore Lee, of the C. S. Navy, and father of General Fitz Lee,) and two daughters, Anne and Mildred.

II.

LIFE PREVIOUS TO THE WAR.

Robert Edward Lee was born at Stratford, Westmoreland County, Virginia, on January 19, 1807, in the same room where Richard Henry and Francis Lightfoot Lee were born.

His early life was passed in the Northern Neck, and a part of it amid the stirring events of the second war with England. The British land and naval forces were for a considerable period within a few miles of his home. A British fleet, under Admiral Cockburn, ravaged the shores of the Chesapeake, and on the 29th of August 1814, the city of Alexandria, then in the District of Columbia, was captured by the enemy's vessels, and soon after, a part of Maryland, and Washington City were occupied. These events occurring so near the home of young Lee, could not fail to exercise a marked influence upon him.

When he was twelve years old his father died. In 1825, Robert Lee entered the Military Academy at West Point. There he remained four years, graduating in 1829. From the first he rose to the head of his class, and retained this "stand" until he left the Academy. During his whole course he never received a demerit, and was never reprimanded. This will be better appreciated by those who understand the demerit system than by the general reader, for the former will readily comprehend how much it is in the power of the Cadet and Academic officers to give demerits to those who least deserve them. The freedom of young Lee from those marks, is a striking proof of the high esteem in which he was held by his comrades. He was noted for his studious habits, and exemplary conduct; he

never drank intoxicating liquors, used tobacco, or indulged in any of the petty vices so popular with young men.

On the 4th of July 1829, Robert E. Lee was graduated first in his class, and received the appointment of Brevet-Second Lieutenant in the corps of Topographical Engineers, to which branch of the service the most distinguished graduates of the West Point Academy are assigned.

After a brief furlough, Lieutenant Lee entered upon the duties of his profession, being employed for several years upon the coast defences of the United States. In 1835 he was appointed assistant astronomer for the demarcation of the boundary line between the States of Ohio and Michigan.

In 1832, Lieutenant Lee married Mary, daughter of George Washington Parke Custis, and grand-daughter of the wife of Washington. By this marriage the young officer became at a subsequent period the proprietor of Arlington House, in Alexandria County, Virginia, opposite Washington City, and of the White House on the Pamunkey River, the scene of the marriage of Washington with "the widow Custis," which was wantonly burned by the Federal army in 1862. Three sons and four daughters were the fruits of this marriage, namely: George Washington Custis, William Henry Fitzhugh, and Robert Edward, and Mary, Anne, Agnes and Mildred. The first and second sons were Major-Generals in the Confederate army, and the youngest entered the service as a private, and was promoted to a staff appointment. One of the daughters, Anne, died during the war.

On the 21st of September 1836, Robert Lee was made First Lieutenant, and in July 1838, Captain of Engineers. In 1844 he was a member of the Board of Visitors to the West Point Academy, and in 1845 a member of the Board of Engineers.

The Mexican War now broke out, and Captain Lee was assigned to the Central army in Mexico, as Chief-Engineer

under General Wool, which position he held throughout the whole campaign under General Scott.

Early in the year 1847, General Scott commenced to collect forces on the island of Lobos for an expedition against the city and castle of Vera Cruz. On the 9th of March 1847, the American army landed near Vera Cruz, and the next day began the investment of the city. The work was commenced by General Worth, and was carried on successfully. Batteries, were erected by the engineers at points commanding the city, and armed with siege and naval guns. The bombardment began on the 22d of March, and in a few days the town and castle surrendered.

Captain Lee rendered important service during the siege. General Scott, quick to appreciate his military genius, at an early day selected him to be one of his personal staff, and always sought his opinion in the Council, attaching great weight to it, and we have, in the recently published autobiography of the veteran soldier, his own testimony regarding the valuable aid which he received from Lee. Referring to his first council at Vera Cruz, he says :

“In my little Cabinet, however, consisting of Colonel Totten, Chief Engineer ; Lieutenant-Colonel Hitchcock, Acting Inspector General ; Captain R. E. Lee, Engineer ; and First Lieutenant Henry L. Scott, Acting Adjutant General, I entered fully into the question of storming parties and regular siege approaches. A death-bed discussion could hardly have been more solemn.” Concerning the service rendered by Captain Lee, during the siege, he says : “I am compelled to make special mention of Captain R. E. Lee, Engineer. This officer greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Vera Cruz.”

After the surrender of Vera Cruz, the American army advanced towards the City of Mexico. The enemy made a stand at Cerro Gordo, and on the 18th of April, after a hard fought

battle, Scott was again victorious. Concerning the part borne by Captain Lee in this engagement, the Old Soldier writes :

“Hearing that Twiggs, supported by Patterson, found himself confronted at Plan del Rio, some fifty miles in the interior, by a strong body of the enemy, and that both divisions were desirous of my presence, I left Vera Cruz on the 12th of April, with a small escort of Cavalry, under Captain Philip Kearney, (who fell in 1862, a distinguished Major General), and hastened to the front. Major-General Patterson, though quite sick, had assumed the command on joining Twiggs, in order to prohibit any aggressive movement before my arrival, according to the universal wish of the troops. No commander was ever received with heartier cheers, — the certain presage of the victories that followed.

“The two advanced divisions lay in the Valley of the Plan del Rio, and the body of the enemy about three miles off, on the heights of Cerro Gordo. Reconnoissances were pushed in search of some practicable route, other than the winding, zigzag road among the spurs of mountains, with heavy batteries at every town. The reconnoissances were conducted with vigor under Captain Lee, at the head of a body of pioneers ; and, at the end of the third day, a passable way for light batteries was accomplished, — without alarming the enemy, — giving the possibility of turning the extreme left of his line of defence, and capturing his whole army, except the reserve, that lay a mile or two higher up the road. Santa Anna said that he had not believed a goat could have approached him in that direction. Hence the surprise and the results were the greater.

“The reconnoissance begun by Lieutenant Beauregard was continued by Captain Lee, Engineer, and a road made along difficult slopes, and over chasms, out of the enemy’s view, though reached by his fire when discovered — until arriving at the Mexican lines, further reconnoissances became impossible

without action. The desired point of the debouchure, the Jalapa road, was not, therefore, reached, though believed to be within easy distance; and to gain that point it now became necessary to carry the heights of Cerro Gordo. * * * * * Twiggs' division, reënforced by Shield's brigade of volunteers, was thrown into position on the 17th, and was of necessity, drawn into action in taking up ground for its bivouac, and the opposing heights for a heavy battery. It will be seen that many of our officers and men were killed or wounded in this sharp combat — handsomely commenced by a company of the Seventh Infantry, under brevet First Lieutenant Gardner, who was highly praised by all his commanders for signal services. Colonel Harney, coming up with his brigade, brushed away the enemy, and occupied the heights, on which, in the night, was placed a battery of one 24-pounder and two 24-pound howitzers, under the superintendence of Captain Lee, Engineers and Lieutenant Hagner, Ordnance. These guns opened next morning and were served with effect by Captain Steptoe, and Lieutenant Brown, Third Artillery; Lieutenant Hagner, Ordnance; and Lieutenant Seymour, First Artillery.

“ * * I am compelled to make special mention of Captain R. E. Lee, Engineer. This officer * * was again indefatigable during these operations in reconnoissances, as daring as laborious, and of the utmost value. Nor was he less conspicuous in planning batteries, and in conducting columns to their stations, under the heavy fire of the enemy.” *

From Cerro Gordo the army pushed on towards the Capital.

* During one of these reconnoissances Captain Lee ventured so far from his supporting column, (Loring's Rifles,) that he found himself right in among the enemy. He hastily concealed himself under a fallen tree, near a spring where the Mexicans obtained their supply of water. While he lay there, Mexican soldiers passed and repassed over the tree, and even sat down on it, utterly unconscious of his presence. He remained until darkness enabled him to withdraw in safety.

The direct road to the city had been well fortified, but these defences were skilfully turned by the Americans, and the battles of Contreras, Cherubusco, Molinos del Rey, and Chapultepec placed the city of Mexico in the hands of the victors. I have only room to notice the distinguished part played in these engagements by Captain Lee, and for this I shall again employ the narrative of General Scott. He writes : —

“The same day (August 18, 1847,) a reconnoissance was commenced to the left of San Augustine, first over difficult grounds, and further on over the same field of volcanic matter which extends to the mountain, some five miles from San Antonio, towards Magdalena. The reconnoissance was continued to-day by Captain Lee, assisted by Lieutenants Beauregard and Tower, all of the Engineers, who were joined in the afternoon by Major Smith, of the same corps. Other divisions coming up, Pillow was advanced to make a practicable road for heavy artillery, and Twiggs thrown farther in front to cover the operations; for, by the partial reconnoissance of yesterday, Captain Lee discovered a large corps of observation in that direction, with a detachment of which, his supports of cavalry and foot, under Captain Kearney and Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, respectively, had a successful skirmish. * * * These corps, over the extreme difficulties of the ground, — partly covered with a low forest, — before described, reached Contreras, and found Cadwallader's brigade in position, observing the formidable movement from the Capital, and much needing the timely reënforcement. * * * Of the seven officers dispatched about sundown from my position, opposite the enemy's centre, and on this side of the volcanic field, to communicate instructions to the hamlet, not one has succeeded in getting through these difficulties, increased by darkness; they have all returned. But the gallant and indefatigable Captain Lee, of the Engineers, who has been constantly with the operating forces,

is (11 o'clock P. M.) just in from Shields, Smith, Cadwallader, etc., to report as above, and to ask that a powerful diversion be made towards the centre of the intrenched camp towards morning.

“Brigadier-General Twiggs, cut off, as above, from the part of his division beyond the impracticable ground, and Captain Lee, are gone, under my orders, to collect the forces remaining on this side, with which to make that diversion, at about five o'clock in the morning.”

The diversion was converted into a real attack, “under the command of Colonel Ransom, of the Ninth, having with him that regiment, and some companies of three others, guided by Captain Lee. * * * * At 3 A. M. the great movement had commenced on the rear of the enemy's camp. The march was rendered tedious by darkness, rain, and wind; but about sunrise, Riley had reached an elevation behind the enemy, whence he precipitated his columns, stormed the intrenchments, planted his several colors upon them, and carried the works, all in seventeen minutes. Cadwallader had also brought up two of his regiments, and, at the appointed time, Colonel Ransom, with his temporary brigade, conducted by Captain Lee, not only made the movement in front to divert and to distract the enemy, but, after crossing the deep ravine, advanced and poured into the work and upon the fugitives, many volleys from his destructive musketry.”

After the victory at Contreras, General Scott, after giving the necessary orders for the movements of the army, and the disposition of the prisoners and spoils, went forward with General Pillow's column.

Upon reaching Coyoacan, two miles, by a cross road, from the river of San Antonio, General Scott sent Captain Lee with Kearney's dragoons and Loring's Rifles to reconnoitre that strong point, and upon receiving Lee's report, sent General

Pillow with Cadwallader's brigade, to attack it in concert with General Worth, who was to operate on the opposite side. At the same time a reconnoissance, under Lieutenant Stevens, supported by Lieutenant G. W. Smith's company of sappers and miners, was sent towards the fortified camp of the enemy at Cherubusco, one mile off. Twiggs, with one brigade and a battery, was ordered to follow and attack, and the other brigade of his division was ordered to support him. In about ten minutes Pierce's brigade was sent to Twiggs' assistance. Pierce was directed to attack the Mexican right and rear, in order to aid the assault in front, and cut off the retreat of the enemy to the capital. At last, Shields, with the New York and South Carolina Volunteers, was sent to support Pierce, and take command of the left wing. Pierce was conducted to his position by Captain Lee, who, after the battle had fairly begun, returned to General Scott, who had stationed himself close in rear of Twiggs' line, and reported that Shields in the rear of Cherubusco, was hard pressed, and in danger of being outflanked if not overwhelmed by superior numbers. Sumner's and Sibley's dragoons and Loring's Rifles, were at once dispatched to Shield's assistance, guided by Captain Lee.

“The victory of the 8th September,” writes General Scott, “at the Molinos del Rey, was followed by daring reconnoissances on the part of our distinguished Engineers, — Captain Lee, Lieutenant Beauregard, etc. Their operations were directed principally to the South — towards the gates of the Piedad,” and the heights of Chapultepec. At Chapultepec, Captain Lee was wounded, and, though anxious to keep on with the army, was compelled by loss of blood to retire from the field, and seek surgical assistance. His skill and bravery had contributed greatly to the great achievements which closed the campaign. As General Scott well says — “In the glorious conquest *all* had contributed — early and powerfully — the

killed, the wounded, and the fit for duty, as much as those who fought at the gates of Belena and San Cosme." In his official report, General Scott pays a high compliment to Captain Lee, who was, he declares, "as distinguished for felicitous execution as for science and daring. Captain Lee," he goes on to say, "so constantly distinguished, also bore important orders from me (September 13th), until he fainted from a wound and the loss of two nights' sleep at the batteries."

General Scott conceived a warm personal friendship for the young engineer, and a high admiration for his military skill. Lee became an especial favorite with him, and the Commander-in-chief sent hardly a single dispatch to Washington City, in which his name was not honorably mentioned. Indeed so greatly did the veteran soldier esteem him, that he declared, years afterwards, "Lee is the greatest military genius in America."

Captain Lee was twice promoted for his services in Mexico. In 1847 he was brevetted Major "for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battle of Cerro Gordo," and later was made Lieutenant-Colonel by brevet, for his conduct at Contreras and Cherubusco. For his services, at Chapultepec, he was, on the 1st of September 1852, made Superintendent of the West Point Academy. The interval between the close of the war and his appointment to this post, was spent by him as a member of the Board of Engineers.

Colonel Lee at once entered upon the discharge of his duties at West Point, where he remained nearly three years. During his administration, and in August 1854, the course of study was, by the direction of the Secretary of War, extended so as to cover a period of five years.

When the new cavalry regiments were organized in 1855, in pursuance of the Act of Congress for that purpose, Colonel Lee was commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel (the full rank) in the

Second Cavalry. This appointment made it necessary to resign his position at West Point, which he did on the 1st of April 1855, being succeeded by Major J. G. Barnard.

The Second Cavalry Regiment was commanded by Colonel Albert Sydney Johnston, an officer of great skill, who was afterwards a General in the Confederate army, and who fell at Shiloh in April 1862. This regiment contained among its officers many who, in the war just closed, rose to high rank in the two armies, and is now famous as having furnished more generals than any organization in the old army. In 1855 it was sent to Texas, where, for several years, it was employed in constant warfare with the Indian tribes. This warfare awakened considerable interest throughout the country at the time, and Colonel Lee bore an active part in it, greatly distinguishing himself in one of the most desperate battles with the Indians.

In 1859, Colonel Lee returned to Washington, and while there was called upon to take part in the John Brown war, which was, in fact, but a prelude to the great struggle which followed so soon afterwards.

On the night of the 16th of October, a band of conspirators, led by a man named John Brown, who had become notorious in the territories as an offender against the laws of the United States, took possession of the town of Harper's Ferry, and of an important United States armory there, containing about fifty thousand small arms. After seizing the town and armory, which were guarded by only two watchmen, Brown dispatched certain of his fellow conspirators to specified farms in the vicinity, to secure the persons of several prominent gentlemen, and collect the slaves. Several citizens were kidnapped by these men, but the slaves refused to take part in the insurrection. At daylight on the 17th of October, the alarm was given, and during the morning, the militia of the surrounding counties were ordered to assemble for the purpose of "putting down the rebellion."

The news of the outbreak was at once telegraphed to Washington, and the matter very greatly exaggerated. General Scott was absent from the city at the time, and the President and Secretary of War, summoned Colonel Lee, as the most trusted officer of the army, to consult with them as to the best course to be adopted. The interview resulted in dispatching a battalion of marines to Harper's Ferry, and directing Colonel Lee to follow and take command of them. Accompanied by his aid, Lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart, Colonel Lee at once started for Harper's Ferry, which he reached on the night of the 17th, having sent orders by telegraph to suspend all operations until his arrival.

The insurgents had, upon the appearance of the militia, which occurred early in the day, retreated to the fire engine-house, in the armory yard, where they had barricaded themselves, and kept up a desultory fire on the town during the afternoon. They had taken Colonel Washington, Mr. Dangerfield, and the other citizens kidnapped by them, into the engine-house with them, where they held them, hoping that the presence of these gentlemen would prevent the troops from firing on them.

As soon as Colonel Lee arrived, he proceeded to surround the engine-house with the marines to prevent the escape of Brown and his men, deferring his attack until morning, lest in the darkness some of the captive citizens might be injured. At daylight on the 18th, wishing to accomplish the object in view without bloodshed, if possible, Colonel Lee sent Lieutenant Stuart to demand the surrender of the insurgents, promising to protect them from violence at the hands of the citizens, until the wishes of the Government of the United States were known. Brown refused the terms offered, and demanded to be permitted to march out with his men and prisoners, with the arms of the former, to be allowed to proceed, without being followed, to

the second toll-gate, where he would free the prisoners. He was then willing to be pursued by the troops, and to fight if he could not escape. This proposition was inadmissible, but as a last resort, Colonel Lee directed Lieutenant Stuart to remonstrate with the insurgents upon the folly of their course. This duty Stuart performed, remaining before the engine-house until his personal danger compelled him to withdraw.

Finding that nothing but force would avail, Colonel Lee gave the order to attack, and the marines, by a gallant assault, captured the building and its inmates, several of whom were killed and wounded, Brown himself being among the latter. The marines lost one man killed and one wounded, but fortunately none of the citizens captured by Brown were injured.

Colonel Lee took good care to protect his prisoners, and there is little doubt that but for his precautions, the surviving conspirators would have been shot down by the excited civilians. He at once telegraphed to Washington for instructions, and was directed to deliver the prisoners to Mr. Ould, District Attorney for the District of Columbia, who was sent by the Government to conduct the legal proceedings, and take measures to bring the insurgents to trial. As soon as Mr. Ould arrived, Colonel Lee turned over the prisoners to him, and, being satisfied that the danger was over, went back to Washington.

At the expiration of his leave of absence, Colonel Lee rejoined his regiment, which, in the early part of 1861, was at San Antonio, Texas.

II.

THE FIRST DAYS OF WAR.

APRIL, 1861 — MAY, 1862.

I.

COLONEL LEE LEAVES THE FEDERAL ARMY.

THE political excitement throughout the country, succeeding the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States, culminated, as had been foreseen, in the withdrawal of the States of the South, and the formation of a new Confederacy composed exclusively of slaveholding states, under the title of the Confederate States of America.

Of the causes which produced this action on the part of the South, I do not design to speak here. They were many, and some of them were closely interwoven with the structure of the Union itself, not the least of which was the weakness imparted to the General Government by the principle of "State rights," a principle, which though plain and indisputable in this case, and sanctioned by those who framed the Constitution of the United States, is nevertheless fatal to all good government. Its natural antagonism to the ends of a firm and useful system was clearly demonstrated during the brief existence of the Confederacy, which was compelled to trample upon the principle as early as the year 1862. Still, the framers of the Federal Con-

stitution, and the States which ratified it, had left open the way for just such a state of affairs as afterwards occurred, and under that Constitution neither the States of the North nor the Federal Government had the slightest right to interfere with any member of the Union to coerce it into obedience to the will of either. Whatever may be the changes that the war has worked in our system of Government,—and they are many and radical, there can be no doubt that the States of the South in seceding from the Union were exercising an undoubted right.

The Commonwealth of Virginia had for sometime clung to the Union, unwilling to abandon it while there remained a hope of continuing in it upon terms consistent with her honor. But the course pursued by the Federal Government, which led to the capture of Fort Sumter, and the subsequent Proclamation of President Lincoln, calling for troops to coerce the seceded States into obedience, left Virginia no alternative but to withdraw from among her enemies, and unite her destiny with that of her Southern sisters. She had exhausted every means at her command for the preservation of peace, and she now prepared to repel the attack with which she was threatened.

Colonel Lee had been an interested spectator of these great events; the early part of the year 1861 found him with his regiment at San Antonio, Texas, but a few months later he returned to Washington. He watched the course of Virginia anxiously, hoping that she would find it consistent with her honor to remain in the Union, and that peace would be preserved. His hope was vain, and when Virginia withdrew from the United States, she called on her children to assemble for her protection. Colonel Lee's course was now plain. He believed that the state of Virginia had the right to pursue the course she had adopted, though his own judgment assured him it would bring great suffering and disaster upon her. He believed, also, that his State had the first claim upon his services, and that it

was his duty to obey the command of Virginia without questioning it. This left him no choice, but to follow the State. He was influenced by no feeling of ambition, or sectional hatred. His course was the result of a conscientious conviction of duty, formed after a mental struggle such as few men are called upon to make. Had he believed it his duty to remain in the service of the United States he would have done so at any sacrifice of his personal feelings ; for he has never yet been false to his sense of duty.

It cost Colonel Lee a great and painful struggle to leave the service with which he had been so long connected. For more than twenty-five years he had served with credit and distinction in the Federal army, and now held in the opinion of both the army and the country the second position in it in point of merit, being regarded as the most fitting successor to the veteran Lieutenant General, to whom he was bound by the strongest ties of love and esteem. If he remained in the Federal service, honor and high military distinction awaited him. The President of the United States, through one of the Cabinet, offered him the immediate command of the army,* and General Scott implored him to remain. Every influence that could be thought of was brought to bear upon the great soldier to induce him to remain in the Federal service. Colonel Lee himself knew that if he complied with these urgent requests, his military ambition would be fulfilled in everything. He knew also that if he linked his fate with that of Virginia, suffering and sorrow were in store for him ; that from wealth he would descend to poverty ; and that he would be proclaimed to the world as a traitor by the Government he had loved so well. It was a terrible trial, and had he been influenced by convictions less pure, or a sense of duty less high, ambition would have triumphed. His feelings

* Statement of Hon. Montgomery Blair, in "the National Intelligencer," August 9, 1866.

may be gathered from the following extract from a letter written by Mrs. Lee, in December 1861, to a Unionist friend, "My husband," she said "has wept tears of blood over this terrible war, but he must, as a man of honor and a Virginian, share the destiny of his State."

Those who do not own Virginia as their mother, can never know the feeling which her children bear her; the love, the devotion, the readiness to lay down everything, even life itself, at her bidding. So deep, so entire is this devotion, that no one, worthy to be called her son, could think for one instant of questioning her right to command, still less of raising his arm to strike his mother.

The action of Virginia put an end to the struggle of Colonel Lee and left him no alternative. To Mr. Blair, who was authorized to offer him the command of the Federal army, he said, "Mr. Blair, I look upon secession as anarchy. If I owned four millions of slaves in the South, I would sacrifice them all to the Union; but how can I draw my sword upon Virginia, my native State?" To General Scott, who begged him, "For God's sake don't resign, Lee," he said, "I am compelled to. I cannot consult my own feelings in this matter."

True to his sense of duty, Colonel Lee resigned his commission as an officer of the United States Army, on the 20th of April 1861, and at the same time sent the following letter to General Scott:—

"ARLINGTON, VA., April 20, 1861.

"GENERAL:—

"SINCE my interview with you on the 18th instant, I have felt that I ought not longer to retain my commission in the army. I therefore tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented

at once but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life, and all the ability I possessed.

“During the whole of that time, — more than a quarter of a century, — I have experienced nothing but kindness from my superiors, and the most cordial friendship from my comrades. To no one, General, have I been as much indebted as to yourself, for uniform kindness and consideration, and it has always been my ardent desire to merit your approbation. I shall carry to the grave the most grateful recollections of your kind consideration, and your name and fame will always be dear to me.

“Save in defence of my native State, I never desire again to draw my sword. Be pleased to accept my most earnest wishes for the continuance of your happiness and prosperity, and believe me, most truly yours,

“R. E. LEE.

“LIEUTENANT-GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT,
“*Commanding United States Army.*” *

* To his sister, the wife of a Union officer, he wrote as follows;

“ARLINGTON, VA., April 20, 1861.

“MY DEAR SISTER: —

“I AM grieved at my inability to see you. * * * * I have been waiting for ‘a more convenient season,’ which has brought to many before me deep and lasting regret. We are now in a state of war which will yield to nothing. The whole South is in a state of revolution, into which, Virginia, after a long struggle, has been drawn; and though I recognize no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end, for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet in my own person I had to meet the question, whether I should take part against my native State. With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. I have, therefore, resigned my commission in the army, and save in defence of my native State, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be needed, I hope I may never be called upon to draw my sword.

Colonel Lee's resignation was accepted on the 20th of April, and he at once repaired to Richmond, leaving behind him the home where he had passed so many happy hours,* and which was to be his no longer.

II.

GENERAL LEE COMMANDS THE ARMY IN VIRGINIA.

Early in 1861, in view of the probable withdrawal of the State, the Legislature of Virginia authorized the Governor of the Commonwealth to raise and organize a military force of from ten to twenty thousand men, under an officer of experience, with the title of Major General.

When Colonel Lee resigned his commission in the Federal army, Governor Letcher at once conferred upon him the rank authorized by the Legislature, and the command of all the forces in Virginia. This appointment was not solicited by Colonel Lee, but he did not feel at liberty to decline it. It was confirmed by the Convention, and the decision of that body was communicated to him on the 23d of April, by the President of the Convention, John Janney, Esq.

General Lee was presented to the Convention by the Chairman of the Military Committee, Mr. Johnson, of Richmond. The President then addressed the new Commander-in-Chief as follows : —

“I know you will blame me, but you must think as kindly of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavored to do what I thought right. To show you the feeling and struggle it has cost me, I send a copy of my letter to General Scott, which accompanied my letter of resignation. I have no time for more. * * * * May God guard and protect you and yours, and shower upon you every blessing, is the prayer of your devoted brother,

R. E. LEE.”

* Arlington.

“Major-General Lee, in the name of the people of your native State here represented, I bid you a cordial and heartfelt welcome to this hall, in which we may almost yet hear the echo of the voices of the statesmen, the soldiers, and sages of by-gone days, who have borne your name, and whose blood now flows in your veins.

“We met in the month of February last, charged with the solemn duty of protecting the rights, the honor, and the interests of the people of this Commonwealth. We differed for a time as to the best means for accomplishing that object; but there never was, at any moment, a shade of difference among us as to the great object itself. And now, Virginia having taken her position, as far as the power of this Convention extends, we stand animated by one impulse, governed by one desire and one determination, and that is, that she shall be defended, and that no spot of her soil shall be polluted by the foot of an invader.

“When the necessity became apparent of having a leader for our forces, all hearts and eyes, by the impulse of an instinct which is a surer guide than reason itself, turned to the old county of Westmoreland. We knew how prolific she had been in other days, of heroes and statesmen. We knew she had given birth to the Father of his Country, to Richard Henry Lee, to Monroe, and last, though not least, to your own gallant father; and we knew well by your deeds, that her productive power was not yet exhausted.

“Sir, we watched with the most profound and intense interest the triumphal march of the army led by General Scott, to which you were attached, from Vera Cruz to the Capital of Mexico. We read of the sanguinary conflicts, and the blood-stained fields, in all of which victory perched upon our own banners. We knew of the unfading lustre that was shed upon the American arms by that campaign, and we knew, also, what

your modesty has always disclaimed, that no small share of the glory of those achievements was due to your valor and your military genius.

“Sir, one of the proudest recollections of my life will be the honor that I yesterday had of submitting to this body, confirmation of the nomination made by the Governor of this State, of you as Commander-in-Chief of the military and naval forces of this Commonwealth. I rose to put the question, and when I asked if this body should advise and consent to that appointment, there rushed from the hearts to the tongues of all the members, an affirmative response, told with an emphasis that could leave no doubt of the feeling whence it emanated. I put the negative of the question for form’s sake, but there was an unbroken silence.

“Sir, we have by this unanimous vote, expressed our convictions that you are at this day among the living citizens of Virginia, ‘first in war.’ We pray to God most fervently that you may so conduct the operations committed to your charge, that it will soon be said of you, that you are ‘first in peace;’ and when that time comes, you will have earned the still prouder distinction of being ‘first in the hearts of your countrymen.’ I will close with one more remark.

“When the Father of his Country made his last will and testament, he gave swords to his favorite nephews, with an injunction that they should never be drawn from their scabbards except in self defence, or in defence of the rights and liberties of their country; and that, if drawn for the latter purpose, they should fall with them in their hands, rather than relinquish them.

“Yesterday your mother, Virginia, placed her sword in your hand, upon the implied condition, that we know you will keep to the letter and in spirit, that you will draw it only in defence, and that you will fall with it in your hand, rather than the object for which it was placed there shall fail.”

To this address General Lee replied :—

“Mr. President and gentlemen of the Convention :— Profoundly impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, for which I must say I was not prepared, I accept the position assigned me by your partiality. I would have much preferred your choice had fallen upon an abler man. Trusting in Almighty God, an approving conscience, and the aid of my fellow citizens, I devote myself to the service of my native State, in whose behalf alone, will I ever again draw my sword.”

General Lee at once addressed himself to the task of organizing the State forces, and putting the country in a condition of defence. It was an undertaking requiring the exercise of the highest energy, skill, and perseverance. In response to the call of the Governor for troops, volunteers were coming in every day in large numbers ; but these were without organization, discipline, or arms. To supply these wants, or, in other words, to make an army out of these peaceful citizens, was the first duty of the new commander. This duty was successfully performed, and in an almost incredibly short time. The troops were organized and equipped, important strategic points throughout the State occupied and fortified, and a spirit of life and activity given to the whole military organization. Besides this, three steamers were converted into vessels of war. So well was the work done, that during the first few weeks of the war, a Northern journal said, in referring to matters in Virginia, “Should the United States’ troops succeed in entering the State of Virginia, they will be compelled to encounter, at various points on the route, large bodies of troops, strongly posted in positions capable of being maintained many days against an invading army. By the way of Alexandria a general of superior ability will be required, as he will probably be compelled to encounter, at some point on the route to Richmond, General Lee himself, or Magruder.”

On the 6th of May the State of Virginia became a member of the Confederate States, and transferred its forces to the new Government. On the 10th of May, General Lee was ordered by President Davis to retain his command of the army in Virginia, until the military organization of the Confederacy was placed on a firm basis. After the assembling of the Provisional Congress at Richmond, in July 1861, he was made a General in the Regular Army of the Confederacy, ranking next to Sydney Johnston, — the list being as follows :— Cooper, Sydney Johnston, Lee.

With characteristic modesty, General Lee refrained from seeking notoriety, being content to execute any task, however humble, confided to him. At a late period of the war, he gave utterance to the feeling which always influenced him, when he said, “I will take any position the country assigns to me, and do the best I can.”

Before going further, I desire to glance briefly at the first events of the war in Virginia.

The State seceded on the 17th of April, 1861. As soon as the passage of the Ordinance of Secession became known to the United States Government, the small Federal garrison at Harper's Ferry evacuated the place, after attempting to destroy the Arsenal there. This building, however, was saved by the timely arrival of the Virginia forces, and a large number of valuable arms, and the greater portion of the machinery preserved to the country. This was on the 19th of the month. On the 20th, Fortress Monroe, which commands the entrance to the James River, was reënforced, and the Gosport Navy Yard, near Norfolk, with the vessels lying there, set on fire and abandoned. The flames in this instance, also, were suppressed by the Virginians, and large quantities of valuable and important stores, and many pieces of artillery were thus rescued. The force at Fortress Monroe was daily increased, and on the

24th of May the city of Alexandria was occupied by the Federal army. Shortly afterwards a strong column, under General McClellan, advanced into Western Virginia.

To meet the danger which threatened them, detachments of Southern troops were stationed at various points, and reënforced as rapidly as possible. The command at Harper's Ferry was given to Colonel T. J. Jackson, and he was soon succeeded by his superior officer, General Joseph E. Johnston. General Beauregard was sent to Manassas Junction, Colonel Magruder was ordered to Yorktown with instructions to place the Peninsula in a state of defence, and General Huger was sent to Norfolk. Sewell's and Pig's Points in the neighborhood of Norfolk were fortified, as were also Craney Island in Elizabeth River, and Gloucester Point opposite Yorktown. The Confederate Government was removed to Richmond, which city became the great depot of supplies, as well as the capital of the new Republic. Volunteering went on briskly, and soon a large force, which was augmented by troops from other States, was collected in Virginia. In Western Virginia a small detachment under General R. S. Garnett, who had done good service as General Lee's Adjutant General, was sent to occupy the country, and serve as a nucleus for more volunteers.

The Northern press affected to consider the course of the South as a mere petty insurrection which could be quickly suppressed. One of these journals expressed itself as follows;

"The nations of Europe may rest assured that Jeff Davis and Co. will be swinging from the battlements of Washington, at least by the Fourth of July. We spit upon a later and longer deferred justice."

Another said;

"Let us make quick work. The 'rebellion' as some people designate it, is an unborn tadpole. Let us not fall into the delusion noticed by Hallam, of mistaking a 'local commotion'

for a revolution. A strong, active, 'pull together' will do our work effectually in thirty days. We have only to send a column of 25,000 men across the Potomac to Richmond, and burn out the rats there; another column of 25,000 to Cairo, seizing the cotton ports of the Mississippi, and retaining the remaining 25,000 included in Mr. Lincoln's call for 75,000 men, at Washington, not because there is any need for them there, but because we do not require their services elsewhere." Another went so far as to declare that, "Illinois can whip the South by herself."

The Federal Government did not share in these extravagances. It clearly recognized the gravity of the struggle upon which it had entered. General Scott, who directed its military affairs, was too old a soldier to commit the folly of underrating his adversary, especially when the Southern armies in Virginia were controlled by the man whose genius he had always valued so highly. On the 3rd of May President Lincoln called for 40,000 additional volunteers, ten more regiments for the regular army, and 18,000 seamen. This, with the force already on hand, would place the Federal strength at at least 150,000 men. The calls were promptly responded to, and it was evident there would be no lack of troops in the North. It is said that the plan of the Federal Government, which was drawn up by General Scott, was to send a strong column into the Mississippi Valley and occupy it; a second was to take possession of Kentucky and check any Southern movements there; while the third column was to capture Richmond. These triumphs, together with a strict blockade of the Southern coast, would, it was believed, effectually "crush the rebellion." Virginia was to be attacked from four directions — from Fortress Monroe, by way of the Peninsula between the James and York Rivers: from Alexandria and Manassas; from the Valley of the Shenandoah and from the Northwest by way of Staunton. The movements of

these four columns were to be simultaneous ; they were to unite at Richmond ; and after the capture of that city, were to coöperate with the forces in Kentucky and the Mississippi Valley, in restoring the entire South to the Federal sway. This was the magnificent programme which was to be thwarted by the able lieutenants of the Southern Commander-in-chief.

By a singular coincidence, the conflict in Virginia opened at Gloucester Point opposite Yorktown, where the war of the Revolution practically ended. This was simply a slight skirmish between an armed tug and a Southern field battery, resulting in the withdrawal of the Federal steamer. It was followed by other skirmishes between shore batteries and Federal steamers, at Sewell's and Pig's Points and at Aquia Creek, to the disadvantage of the latter, and outposts and picket fights at numerous points throughout the State, with varied success. On the 3rd of June, Colonel Porterfield, who had been sent to Western Virginia by General Lee for the purpose of recruiting, was attacked and defeated at Philippi by General Kelley.

The first engagement of importance was at Great Bethel, between Yorktown and Hampton, in which, on the 10th of June, a force of 1800 infantry and six pieces of artillery, imperfectly intrenched, defeated a column of about 5000 men with artillery, advancing up the Peninsula from Fortress Monroe. Considered in itself, the battle of Bethel was comparatively an insignificant affair ; but when it is remembered that it was the first decided trial of strength between the combatants, and that it produced a feeling of confidence in the Southern army and raised the enthusiasm of the people to a still greater degree, we can easily understand why the South should class it among the principal battles of the war. Besides this, a defeat of Colonel Magruder would have placed the little army of the Peninsula at the mercy of the Federals, and have opened the way to Richmond.

Bethel was followed by the brief campaign of Generals Johnston and Patterson in the Valley of Virginia, and the disastrous defeat of Colonel Pegram at Rich Mountain, and the death of General Garnett, during his retreat from Laurel Ridge.

On the 16th of July, the Federal army, numbering 55,000 infantry, nine regiments of cavalry, and 49 pieces of artillery, advanced from Alexandria towards Bull Run, behind which the Confederate army, under General Beauregard was posted. General Johnston, hearing of this, eluded Patterson, and hastened to Bull Run, where he arrived with a part of his force on the 20th of July. The entire Southern army, on the morning of July 21st, amounted to 31,431 infantry, 500 cavalry, and 55 guns. After an ineffectual attempt to force a passage of Bull Run, at Blackburn's Ford, on the 18th of July, the Federal army attacked the forces of Beauregard and Johnston on the morning of the 21st, and was routed and driven back to Washington, after a hard-fought battle.

After this engagement neither army made any advance, until General Johnston occupied Mason's and Munson's Hills in sight of Washington City.

III.

THE CAMPAIGN IN WESTERN VIRGINIA.

When General Lee took command of the Virginia forces, he sent Colonel G. A. Porterfield, who had been an officer in the Regular Army of the United States, to Western Virginia, to raise volunteers for the defence of the State. Porterfield proceeded at once to his destination, and, establishing his headquarters at Philippi, a village in Barbour County, issued his proclamation for troops for service in the State army. The

people of Western Virginia refused to respond to the call, and at the same time enlisted rapidly in the Federal army.

Porterfield found it impossible to procure recruits, and ascertained that the enemy were collecting troops so rapidly along the Ohio River, that unless a Southern army could be sent into Western Virginia, that portion of the State would be speedily overrun by the Federals. He promptly informed General Lee of this, and finding his little command of less than seven hundred men threatened by a Federal column at Grafton, determined to withdraw to Beverley, in Randolph County. Before this resolution could be put into effect, his camp at Philippi was surprised and captured by five thousand Federal soldiers, and his men put to flight, with the loss of several killed and wounded, and a few prisoners.

General Lee, as soon as he received Colonel Porterfield's dispatch, prepared to send troops to Western Virginia. About five thousand infantry, some cavalry, and several batteries of artillery were assembled at Beverley, late in May, and the command bestowed upon Brigadier-General R. S. Garnett, a gallant officer, who had served as General Lee's Adjutant-General during the first few weeks of the war.

General Garnett, after reaching Beverley, proceeded to occupy a strong position near that town. With a force of three thousand infantry, six pieces of artillery, and three companies of cavalry, he intrenched himself on the slopes of Laurel Hill, holding the main turnpike from Staunton to Wheeling. This road, which here runs nearly southward, was his direct line of retreat, being the great highway across the mountains in this region. If cut off from it, his only chance of retreat was by difficult roads over the mountains to the eastward. Five miles below Garnett's position, at Laurel Hill, a road from the west passes through this spur, at a defile known as Rich Mountain, and strikes the main road. To guard this approach against any

effort of the enemy to seize his line of retreat, Garnett posted Colonel John Pegram, his second in command, with sixteen hundred infantry and four pieces of artillery, at Rich Mountain. From the position thus secured, the Confederates sent their cavalry throughout the mountain counties, and harassed the Federal forces in that region very greatly.

The command of the Department of the Ohio, consisting of the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, had been entrusted by the Federal Government, early in May, to General George B. McClellan, who had served with distinction in the Engineer Corps of the Regular Army. As soon as he learned the presence of Porterfield and Garnett in Western Virginia, McClellan determined to cross the Ohio, which properly bounded his department, drive the Southern troops east of the mountains, and occupy the mountain region with his own forces. It has been seen that the movement against Porterfield was successful.

General McClellan now resolved to attack Garnett, and in order to defeat him, directed his march so as to strike the main line of retreat of the Confederate force below the position held by Colonel Pegram, and at the same time to send another column to seize the only other route by which Garnett could retreat, and thus capture the whole force.

Accordingly, on the 11th of July, Brigadier-General Rosecranz, with about three thousand men, was dispatched to attack Pegram's left and rear, while McClellan, with five thousand infantry and some artillery, attacked in front.

After a difficult march over the mountain by an unusual road, Rosecranz succeeded in turning Pegram's left, and gaining his rear, and after a short but stubborn fight, Pegram was defeated. Six companies of infantry escaped, but the rest of the Southern force fell into the hands of the enemy.

As soon as General Garnett heard of the result of the fight at Rich Mountain, he determined to abandon Laurel Hill and

fall back to Huttonsville. Owing to a misconstruction of his orders, the road was left open in the direction of the enemy, and blocked some distance from Beverley on his own line of march. This forced him to leave the main turnpike, and retreat by a mountain road into Hardy County. McClellan pursued vigorously, and the Confederates were put to great straits to effect their escape. About five hundred prisoners were taken, and General Garnett himself was killed at one of the fords of Cheat River.

The Confederate loss in the campaign was very slight in killed and wounded, being less than one hundred, but they lost over one thousand prisoners, nearly all their artillery, and the greater part of their baggage.

The disastrous result of the campaign spread a feeling of gloom for a time throughout the South. It was the first defeat the Southern arms had sustained, and the people were totally unused to war. The remnants of Garnett's command retreated to Monterey in Highland County, where they were soon joined by reënforcements from Richmond; but though temporary successes were frequently gained by the South, McClellan's promptness and boldness, gave the Federals a hold upon Western Virginia, which they never relaxed throughout the war.

While Garnett was at Rich Mountain, Brigadier-General Henry A. Wise was sent to Western Virginia to raise troops in the Kanawha Valley. He established his headquarters at Charleston, and succeeded in organizing and arming twenty-five hundred infantry, seven hundred cavalry, and three batteries of artillery, which force was soon after increased to four thousand men. The Federal army under McClellan had by this time crossed the Ohio River. A Federal force was at Parkersburg, and the enemy were using every effort to bring into the Kanawha Valley an army sufficient to drive Wise out of it. Soon the command of General Cox moved from the Ohio River

to attack him. The Southern Cavalry had several brilliant encounters at Scary Creek and elsewhere, with the advanced forces of the enemy, and Wise prepared to give battle to Cox, when he learned that his right and rear were exposed to McClellan's main column by the defeat of Garnett at Laurel Hill, and that he was in danger of being hemmed in between Cox and McClellan. General Wise at once fell back to Lewisburg, reaching that place about the 1st of August, after a retreat which was rendered somewhat difficult by an insufficiency of transportation.

A few weeks later, Brigadier General John B. Floyd was sent west of the mountains, with his brigade, which numbered about eighteen hundred infantry, a battalion of cavalry, and a battery of artillery, to operate in the Valley of the Kanawha. He repaired at once to the White Sulphur Springs, in Greenbrier County, about nine miles from General Wise's position. He consulted with General Wise, and the two commanders agreed upon an advance towards Gauley River. Unfortunately their columns moved separately, and failed to act in concert at any subsequent period. The Gauley River was reached, and crossed by Floyd's forces, but Wise halted on the bank of the stream. Floyd attacked a superior Federal force under Colonel Tyler, at the Cross Lanes in Fayette County, and defeated it with some loss on the 26th of August. On the 10th of September, he was himself attacked at Carnifex Ferry, on the Gauley, by General Rosecranz, who had succeeded McClellan in command of the Federal army in West Virginia. Rosecranz's force numbered nine thousand men and several batteries of artillery. Floyd had seventeen hundred and fifty men. The Confederates succeeded in maintaining their position against heavy odds until night, when Floyd recrossed the river. Rosecranz moved forward in pursuit, and forced Floyd and Wise back to Sewell's Mountain. Fresh disagreements oc-

curred between the Confederate leaders, and Floyd fell back to Meadow Bluff, eighteen miles west of Lewisburg, and Wise halted on the eastern slope of Sewell's Mountain, where he intrenched his position, which he named Camp Defiance. Thus, through the failure of the two Generals to coöperate with each other, the campaign resulted in nothing of value to the Confederates.

Meanwhile, upon the death of General Garnett, General Lee was ordered to Western Virginia to take command of the army in that region. He at once set out from Richmond for Monterey, taking with him reënforcements, which, added to the remnant of Garnett's troops, brought the army to about sixteen thousand men. The roads were in a horrible condition, being almost knee deep in mud, and it was with great difficulty that the army could move forward, but advancing steadily westward, General Lee, by the 10th of August, reached the neighborhood of Cheat Mountain, and found it strongly fortified. The position was very formidable, but General Lee determined to endeavor, by strategic movements, to dislodge the enemy from it, when, by pushing forward rapidly with his whole army, he hoped to drive the Federals to the Ohio.

General Reynolds, second in command to Rosecranz, had taken position to cover the approaches to Beverley, with a force of about twelve thousand men. The bulk of this army was strongly intrenched at a point at the junction of Tygart's Valley River, and Elk Run, which post was called by the Federals "Elk Water." The rest held the pass at the second summit of Cheat Mountain, on the main road from Staunton to Parkersburg. The mountain had what may be called three distinct summits. The second was the most available for military purposes, and the enemy had strengthened it with a powerful fort or block house in the bend of the road, flanked by intrenchments of earth and logs, protected by dense abattis

on every side. On two sides it was impossible to approach this stronghold, for the mountain rose almost perpendicular from the river to the fort.

General Lee felt his way cautiously along the road from Huntersville to Huttonsville, and halted near the Federal position at Cheat Mountain. Careful reconnoissances developed its immense strength, but Colonel Rust, of the Third Arkansas Regiment, who had made what proved to be a very imperfect reconnoissance of the Federal position, reported that it was perfectly practicable to turn it and carry it by assault. General Lee at once gave orders for a combined attack on the enemy both at Elk Water and Cheat Mountain. The weather was very cold, and the difficulties to be overcome by the troops in occupying the positions assigned them were very great, but, in spite of these obstacles, General Lee succeeded in reaching a point below the enemy at Elk Water, placing other portions of his force on the spurs of the mountain to the east and west of the block house, and moving another part of his army down the river close to the enemy. These dispositions completed, General Lee was ready to attack the Federals at Elk Water, as soon as Colonel Rust's guns should be heard on Cheat Mountain.

Colonel Rust, with fifteen hundred men, was ordered to gain the rear of the fort, where he had reported an assault practicable, and carry the work by storm. After considerable exertion Rust gained the rear of the fort, but saw at a glance that he had been deceived in his former reconnoissance. Indeed the Federal abattis extended so far, and was so utterly impenetrable that it was impossible to reach the fort. Seeing this, Colonel Rust decided not to make the assault, and at once withdrew his troops. His failure rendered it useless for General Lee to attack the works at Elk Water, as a victory there would have been useless with the enemy at Cheat Mountain.

The Confederate troops were withdrawn, and the effort abandoned.

Considerable criticism has been drawn out on both sides by the failure of General Lee to take the enemy's works at Elk Water, which his troops had surrounded. No doubt such a victory was within his grasp, but General Lee wisely considered that as it would accomplish practically nothing while the enemy remained in the impregnable stronghold on the mountain, it was not worth the sacrifice of life that would be necessary to accomplish it.

Soon after he had drawn off his troops, General Lee was informed by couriers of the exposed situation of Floyd and Wise, against whom the combined forces of Rosecranz and Cox were advancing. He at once decided to transfer his army to the vicinity of Lewisburg, and endeavor to defeat Rosecranz before the fall rains should render the roads impassable. He reached Floyd's position on the 20th of September, and, after conferring with him and inspecting the locality, set out for Camp Defiance, where he arrived on the 22d. A close inspection satisfied him that the line held by General Wise on the Sewell Mountain was more advantageous than that of General Floyd at Meadow Bluff, and he at once ordered all his troops forward, and proceeded to strengthen his position. He had left a part of his army to hold the Federal force at Cheat Mountain in check, but, including the commands of Floyd and Wise, he had with him about fifteen thousand men, which was the strength of Rosecranz's army.

Rosecranz, who had been pressing on after Wise and Floyd, now reached the Sewell Mountain, and took position on the top and western slope of it; the armies were now in sight of each other, and out-post fights and skirmishes went on constantly. Expecting to be attacked, General Lee made no advance, and the adversaries confronted each other for nearly

two weeks. At last, Rosecranz, discovering the true nature of the force opposed to him, on the night of the 6th of October broke up his camp and retreated westward. The retreat was discovered by the Confederates the next morning, but no attempt at pursuit was made. The army was not provided with the means of dragging its artillery through the mud, and its transportation was very deficient.

It must be confessed that General Lee disappointed the expectations of the country in this campaign. He showed less vigor and genius than at any other period of the war.

General Henry R. Jackson had been left by General Lee, with twenty-five hundred men, to hold his position on the Greenbrier River. On the 3d of October, General Reynolds, with about four thousand Federal troops, moved out from Cheat Mountain and attacked Jackson. The Federals were repulsed and driven from the field with a loss of about two hundred and sixty killed and wounded; the Confederates had six men killed and thirty-one wounded.

IV.

GENERAL LEE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

The campaign in Western Virginia closed with the battle of the Greenbrier. About this time, the efforts of the Federal Government were directed principally toward points on the Southern coast, and late in the fall the Confederate Government directed General Lee to proceed to Charleston and take command of the coast department. The enemy had captured Fort Hatteras and the works in Port Royal Harbor, and were threatening the interior. They made no serious effort to ad-

vance inland, however, and as it was impossible without the aid of a navy, which the Confederates could not command, to dislodge them from the positions they had gained, General Lee's duties consisted principally in fortifying the exposed points of the coast. His task was well performed, and it was owing to his skill and labor that the subsequent efforts of the Federals in this quarter met with so little success. The winter passed away quietly, every moment being improved by General Lee to push forward his work, but before the season of active operations returned, he was called away to a new command.

By the spring of 1862 the Confederate cause had suffered so many disasters, the most of which were so clearly attributable to the conduct of the Government, that there was manifested throughout the country a very decided desire that the President should be relieved of the direction of the military affairs of the Confederacy, and that that duty should be entrusted to a Commander-in-chief, who should have nothing to do with the civil department of the Government. The country regarded General Lee as the man most suited for the post, and with a view to carry out the wishes of the people, the Congress passed a bill creating the office of Commanding General. President Davis vetoed this bill as unconstitutional, but, as he also shared the belief that General Lee ought to be assigned a more important command, appointed him to the chief command of the armies of the South, subject, however, to "the direction of the President." Though this was not the position designed for General Lee by the people, it was a fortunate appointment for the South, and one which largely increased the sphere of the great soldier's usefulness.

General Lee entered upon his new duties on the 13th of March 1862,* and the change was immediately felt. New life

* The following is the order assigning him to duty at Richmond :

seemed to be infused into the Government, and from the time his firm will was first felt at the head of affairs, the military situation began to grow brighter. Had his counsels been followed in every thing, I might now write quite a different story from that which it is my duty to relate. He was very popular in his new position, but this was not strange, as he was one of the few Confederate officials who did not deem it a sacrifice of his dignity to treat a stranger with courtesy and kindness. His child-like simplicity was never more apparent than now. Many persons had expected him to make considerable military display, and could hardly realize that the plain, quiet gentleman who rode daily about the lines of Richmond, clad in simple gray, without any decorations, was bending all the energies of a genius second to none in the world, to one of the most arduous tasks that ever tried the skill and patience of a soldier.

General Lee retained his position as Commanding General but a few months, events which I shall now proceed to relate, calling him to a more active field of usefulness, the duties of which were so engaging, that he requested the President, towards the autumn, to relieve him of the general control of the armies.

“WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
RICHMOND, March 13, 1862.

“GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 14.

“General Robert E. Lee is assigned to duty at the seat of Government; and, under the direction of the President, is charged with the conduct of military operations in the armies of the Confederacy.

“By command of the Secretary of War,
S. COOPER, *Adjutant and Inspector-General.*

III.

THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN.

MARCH — AUGUST, 1862.

I.

MATTERS AT CENTREVILLE.

IN its effects upon the country, the victory at Manassas was the greatest misfortune that could have befallen the South. It gave to the people of the Confederacy a foolish idea that the North had received a mortal wound. The victory had been greatly magnified by the press, and its importance ridiculously exaggerated. The Southern people became intoxicated with their triumph. They thought that this one barren success had practically ended the war, — a delusion which was materially increased by the declaration of the Secretary of War, Mr. Benjamin, during the autumn and winter, that peace would be concluded “in ninety days.” They did not, or would not, reflect that the army which had been routed on the banks of Bull Run, was merely a temporary affair, and far inferior in every respect to the host which the Federal States could create. They shut their eyes to the tremendous effort that was being made in the North to retrieve the defeat which had befallen the arms of the Union, and with an infatuation as remarkable as it was disastrous in its effects, persisted in believing that the signs

of the growing harmony and determination of their enemies were but evidences of their division and weakness. They could not, or would not, realize that the North was fighting for its existence.

Such infatuation, such blindness, must have been wilful. There were ample opportunities of learning the intentions and acts of the Federals. The Northern newspapers were filled with accounts of the extraordinary efforts being made by their authorities to raise and equip new armies, and these statements were extensively copied by the Southern press, and confirmed by every person who came from the enemy's country. A few men in the South, such as Lee, the two Johnstons, Floyd, and some others, recognized the magnitude of the contest in which they were engaged, and repeatedly warned the people of their folly, but in vain. The Government, which had begun its existence with the terrible blunder of thinking there would be no war, — that a nation could achieve its freedom without a struggle, — now shared the popular delusion.

The result was what might have been foreseen. Volunteer-ing soon ceased almost entirely. Even the heaviest bounties were impotent to bring recruits. The measures of the Confederate Congress were thinning instead of filling the ranks, and when the New Year dawned, there was reason to fear that the spring campaign would find the South without an army, for it was exceedingly doubtful whether the troops already in the service would renew their enlistments. General Floyd, it is true, had declared his belief to a member of the Confederate Congress that the Government would be forced to compel the service of its arms-bearing citizens, but the President and his advisers had scouted this idea as preposterous.

The Confederate Government began the war by trying to cover everything with its armies, — a blunder which the sad experience of Austria might have warned it against. The

adoption of this plan led to the formation of long, weak lines of defence, which simply afforded the enemy opportunities of attacking detached portions of them, and destroying or capturing the forces. The Federals were quick to profit by this. When the spring came, they had broken the line of defence in Kentucky, and had defeated or captured the forces at Forts Henry and Donelson, and Mill Spring, and had pushed the Western army back behind the Tennessee River, and on the coast had wrested from the Confederates the important positions of Port Royal and Roanoke Island. Everywhere, save in Northern Virginia, where as yet no collision had occurred, victory perched upon the Northern eagles.

Even these disasters were powerless to arouse the Southern Government and Congress. The fact is the South was behind the age. The attempt to carry out the doctrine of State Rights had broken up the old Union, where its absurdity was fairly established in the efforts to administer the Government in accordance with it. However necessary the doctrine may have been at the period of the formation of the Federal Government, the necessity for it had long passed by. No government can exist where the members are more powerful than, or independent of, the common head. In a Revolution especially, there must be but one mind to plan, one will to command and execute. The Confederate leaders, however, could not be made to understand this. They had embarked in a Revolution which required the exercise of the greatest boldness and firmness. Scarcely had they commenced their new career before they began to exhibit a pitiful fear of the States, and an astonishing lack of resource and fertility of expedients. Although they had cast aside the old Government, they brought its quarrels and jealousies into the new; and in consequence of these things, but few of the truly great men of the South had been drawn into the Government or Congress, neither of which

bodies devised any great measures, or ever rose to the height demanded by the occasion. Hereafter, when the historian shall seek for traces of wisdom and genius on the part of the Southern leaders, it is to the army that he must turn. The civil branch of the Confederacy never showed genius, and rarely exhibited wisdom, and its unfitness for the task assigned it was the crushing load that finally ruined the cause.

This weakness prevented the President and his cabinet from listening to the advice of the commanders of their armies, who counselled the voluntary abandonment of the frontier and the concentration of the forces where they could be useful and not exposed to such certain disaster. Never during the whole war was this advice heeded, and the sound military conceptions of such men as Lee and Johnston were thrown aside for fear of offending certain Governors of States, or sundry local politicians, who, like the Government, were incapable of appreciating the duty of the hour.

The same weakness induced the Government and Congress to rely upon voluntary enlistments to recruit the armies. They were afraid of encroaching upon some of the rights of the States by adopting a general conscription law. They hesitated long when their good sense must have shown them the danger of delay; and it was not until the Federal forces were menacing the Capital itself that they passed the "Conscription Bill," which went into operation in May, 1862. The haste with which this Bill was adopted necessarily made it very defective; but the frequent revisions which it received at the hands of the Congress failed to make it either acceptable to the people, or as beneficial to the army as it might have been.

Certainly it was necessary that the people should be forced into the military service if the war was to be carried on, but it was very unfortunate that some other plan than that chosen was not used. That sweeping measure at once created the

greatest dissatisfaction in the South ; and very reasonably, too, for it was conscription in its most odious form. Then, too, to execute the law required the withdrawal of at least an army corps in numbers from the field. It would have been far better to have taken the plan afterwards pursued by the Federal Government, — that of determining the number of troops wanted, and assigning to each State its proper quota, and then drawing for them. In this way recruits could have been gained as readily as by conscription, and the country would not have been crippled and outraged as it was by the barbarous measure upon which the Congress blundered.*

On the 1st of March 1862, however, the Congress was still hesitating, trying to devise some measure for filling up the armies. It had, during the winter, adopted what was known as the “Furlough and Bounty Law,” a measure which offered a heavy bounty and a furlough to every soldier who would reënlist for the war. The bounty was to be paid at a later period, but the furlough was to be granted during the winter. Many of those who went home on these furloughs did so with the intention of remaining there ; and the measure, in the course of the winter, reduced the strength of the army of Northern Virginia by more than twenty thousand men.

After the battle of Manassas in July, 1861, General Johnston assumed the chief command of the Southern Army of the Potomac. He had an arduous task before him. The army being composed of raw troops and of a people habitually impatient of restraint, it was necessary first to reorganize the whole body. The battle of Manassas had greatly demoralized the troops. “We were,” says General Johnston, “almost as much disorganized by our victory, as the Federals by their

* I am happy to learn that I am supported in this opinion by General J. E. Johnston. See Swinton's “*Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac.*” p. 572.

defeat. Many, supposing the war was over, actually went home. A party of our soldiers, hearing that a friend lay wounded twenty miles off, would start out to go and see him; or another, that an acquaintance was dead, and they would go and bury him. Our men had in a larger degree the instinct of personal liberty than those of the North; and it was found very difficult to subordinate their personal will to the needs of military discipline." * Unfortunately the Southern armies were never in a state of perfect control. General Lee once said, "I could always rely on my army for *fighting*, but its discipline was poor." One reason of this lack of discipline was the fact that the officers, below the grade of brigadier-general, were elected by the troops, and those who hoped for such favors at the hands of their comrades, too frequently earned their popularity by relaxing the authority which is as necessary to an army as pure air to the human organization. This was a great evil during the whole war, and eventually did much to ruin the army.

By diligent efforts General Johnston at length succeeded in bringing the disorderly mass into shape. By October the work of reorganization was almost accomplished. The forces on the Potomac, consisting of the Army of the Shenandoah, originally commanded by General Johnston, and the Army of the Potomac, the original command of General Beauregard, were consolidated, under the title of the "Army of Northern Virginia," General Johnston holding the chief command. This force occupied a strong position on the heights of Centreville, and detachments from it held various points on the Potomac River, where, by means of efficient batteries, they closed the navigation of the stream, and blockaded the Federal Capital. A division, under Major General T. J. Jackson, was stationed in the Valley of Virginia to hold it against the enemy. A small force

* "Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac." p. 59.

was thrown forward to Leesburg on the Upper Potomac, to observe the enemy and keep open the communication between Winchester and Centreville; and a division under Major-General Holmes held the line of the Rappahannock, and guarded the rear of the main army. On the 31st of October 1861, there were present for duty at all these points forty-four thousand one hundred and thirty-one men of all arms. By the first of January 1862, sixty-two thousand one hundred and twelve were present for duty. (Absent from various causes, — chiefly on furlough, thirty-five thousand nine hundred and seventy-six).

During the fall and winter, General Johnston was greatly embarrassed in his movements by the failure of the Government to coöperate with him as he had a right to expect. One of the chief difficulties under which he labored was a want of supplies. His army never had more than one day's provisions in advance, and sometimes the rations were short. He had urged the Government to establish depots of provisions and military stores with his army, hoping in this way to secure food enough for his men to enable him to strike a blow at the Federals before their preparations for the next campaign should be completed. The Commissary-General, however, treated all such appeals with contempt, and not unfrequently responded to them with coarse insults. The President sustained Colonel Northrop, and General Johnston was forced to confine himself to a strict defensive, the evils of which he clearly foresaw. It was not certain either that the army would always be supplied, for it was connected with Richmond by only a single-track railway, which might be cut by the enemy at any moment. Besides this, all the supplies had to be hauled from Manassas to Centreville over wretched roads, an undertaking both difficult and expensive. However, it was not possible to overrule Colonel Northrop.

As I shall have frequent occasion to refer to the gross mismanagement of the Commissariat of the Confederacy, it may be well to devote a few words here to the official holding the place of Commissary-General under the Confederate Government.

Colonel Northrop in some manner succeeded in gaining the friendship of Mr. Davis when they were both lieutenants in the United States Army, during the Black Hawk war. After the latter left the army, he did not meet with his friend for twenty years. In the meantime, Northrop removed to Charleston, S. C. (having resigned his commission), where he became a parish doctor, and at one time was a patient in a lunatic asylum. When Mr. Davis was made President of the Confederacy, he bethought him of his old friend, and offered him the important post of Commissary-General. This measure occasioned great surprise throughout the country, and Colonel Northrop's unfitness for his post was represented to the President more than once, but without effect. Mr. Davis would not desert his friend, and sustained him against the whole country. Indeed the fiercer the opposition to the Colonel, the more tenaciously did the President cling to him. General Lee frequently charged him with incompetency, and urged the President to remove him. In a letter written January 22d, 1864, he particularly urged this.*

The conduct of Colonel Northrop was in itself enough to ruin the Southern cause. He was entirely ignorant of the duties of his office, and utterly incapable of learning them. He would brook no interference from any one, and, secure in the favor of the President, treated his superior officers with contempt, and replied to their appeals for food for their troops with coarse insults. He publicly declared that no general had

* A Rebel War Clerk's Diary. Vol. ii. p. 147.

a right to issue orders to him, and refused to obey any commands except those of Mr. Davis.* His mismanagement and brutality starved the army in the midst of plenty, robbed the people, and in the end caused all classes to distrust and dislike the Government. Yet when Senator Orr, on the 18th of January 1864, when the cause was on the verge of the destruction to which Colonel Northrop had contributed so greatly, waited on Mr. Davis to ask the removal of the Commissary-General, the President declared to him that Colonel Northrop was one of the greatest geniuses in the South, and that, if he had the physical capacity he would put him at the head of an army.† Mr. Davis must have known the fearful sufferings of his starving armies, for every child in the South had wept over them: he must have known that his friend had produced the famine, for it was evident to all, and he was furnished with proofs too plain and truthful to be doubted. Yet he kept this man in a position to cause more suffering, and that too in defiance of the Constitution, for he did not dare to send his name to the Senate for confirmation, as he knew that body would reject him. In view of all this, do I err in charging upon President Davis the responsibility for the sufferings of the soldiers of the South? Heaven knows I pity Mr. Davis in his troubles, and would not willingly add to them — but the truth of history must be vindicated, and it is due to the Southern army that they should know what I have written.

During the winter the army suffered much from an insufficiency of clothing and shoes. The Quartermaster's Department was deficient in the energy and ability necessary to provide for the wants of the troops, and too sadly afflicted with dishonesty to do what really lay in its power.

The absence of competent Engineer officers was also greatly

* A Rebel War Clerk's Diary. Vol. ii. p. 188.

† A Rebel War Clerk's Diary. Vol. ii. p. 131.

felt. Those who were employed were principally Civil Engineers, who were ignorant of, or inexperienced in the duties of a military engineer, and as late as the middle of August 1861, General Johnston was left without a staff officer of this branch of the service capable of discharging the slightest duty appertaining thereunto.

The staff was also unorganized, and the lack of such officers was not the least of the difficulties which had to be encountered. Those who had gained some insight into these duties in the "old army," were assigned to other positions, and the Government made no effort to supply the deficiency. Every Government but that of the South has always made the staff the object of its especial care; but Mr. Davis bitterly opposed all plans for the formation of this branch upon the basis so successfully adopted in Europe, and even after several years of constant proof of its great necessity, refused to execute the law of Congress until two days before the evacuation of Petersburg. Throughout the war, General Lee, General Johnston, and others of similar rank were allowed but an insufficient number of aides-de-camp. Military men will readily comprehend the magnitude of this blunder.

The arms of the troops were not always good, though this could not be remedied then. It was difficult to procure arms of any description, and it was not until a later period that captures, importations, and the Government manufactures placed the army on an efficient footing in this respect.

These were some of the difficulties against which General Johnston had to contend. He persevered, however. Towards the close of February he found it necessary to put a stop to the system of furloughs, in order to prevent his command from melting away, and in the campaign which ensued, the Army of Northern Virginia stepped at once into the place which it will always hold in the history of the struggle.

Few armies have ever had more to be proud of. It was recruited from the flower of the Southern population, and for four years was the chief support of its cause. When others doubted, these men always had faith. Whether they succeeded or failed, their devotion to the South always shone out bravely. Hungry, half naked, bruised and torn by the rugged ground over which they marched barefooted, contending as no other soldiers ever did before, against a powerful foe, their superior in everything but courage, these men were true and devoted to the last, and they have won a fame that shall endure as long as true manhood is valued, or valor honored. Well have they deserved the tribute which the ablest military critic of the North has paid them. "Who," says he, "can ever forget it that once looked upon it, that array of 'tattered uniforms and bright muskets?' That body of incomparable infantry, the Army of Northern Virginia — which for four years carried the Revolt on its bayonets, opposing a constant front to the mighty concentration of power brought against it; which, receiving terrible blows, did not fail to give the like; and which vital in all its parts, died only with its annihilation." *

The 1st of March 1862, found this army lying along the Potomac, from the Valley of Virginia to the neighborhood of Fredericksburg. Its muster rolls showed eighty-four thousand two hundred and twenty-five names, but of these only forty-seven thousand six hundred and seventeen were present for duty. Yet these were ready for the campaign. Among the division commanders were Jackson, Longstreet, Ewell, and Hill, and among the subordinates, many whose names were afterwards glorious. Stuart, the *beau sabreur* of the South, led the cavalry, and Pendleton was chief of artillery.

Such was the condition of affairs in Virginia when the campaign opened.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 16.

II.

THE FEDERAL PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN.

The defeat of McDowell's army at Manassas was a blessing in disguise to the Federal Government. It showed the North the nature of the undertaking upon which it had ventured, and the worthlessness of its previous ideas of conquest. It convinced the Federal authorities that their armies must be something more than mobs. The disaster was galling to the North, but it was borne better than the triumph of the South. When the first feelings of gloom and despondency had passed away, the United States set to work energetically to build up new armies and a navy. Every one saw that the work must all be done over from the beginning, and it was done bravely and thoroughly. Dissensions in the North were ended, and the Government was sustained in everything. New levies were made, a heavy loan negotiated with the New York banks, and vessels were chartered, purchased and built for the navy. The measures of President Lincoln and his advisers were prompt and decisive. They were also practical and sensible. Well would it have been for the South, could her Executive have been blessed with the homely wisdom of his Northern rival.

I do not mean to advocate all the measures of the Federal Government at this period. Many were despotic and arbitrary, and have been justly and severely condemned. Still no one can deny that the despotism of the North was well managed and necessary to its success. The Constitution was not suited to the task before Mr. Lincoln, and he was wise enough to know this. His measures were consistent and directed towards

one steadfast end, and were not, like those of the other side, weak, wavering, and odious to his people.

It had been understood from the first that the principal struggle of the war would be in Virginia, and after the defeat of McDowell, the Federal Government proceeded to collect another army at Washington. The command of this force was given to Major-General George B. McClellan, whose exploits in Western Virginia I have already noticed.

The new commander was one of whom it is difficult to form a just estimate. He entered upon his duties with a flattering reputation, and it was confidently expected by his countrymen that he would, with the force at his command, destroy the army of General Johnston and capture Richmond. As we shall see, he failed in both of these objects, but he had, at the same time, much to contend against in the opposition of certain of his countrymen and the interference of his Government, after the campaign had actually begun. In the old service General McClellan had been regarded as one of its most promising officers, and had been a member of the Commission sent to Europe by President Pierce, to report upon the military organizations of the Old World, with a view to remedying the defects in his own. His success in Western Virginia made him the most distinguished commander in the North, and indicated him as the proper person to take charge of the new army in Virginia. He was undoubtedly the ablest commander that army ever had, but, after a careful review of the events in which he bore a part, I cannot call him a *great general*. He was better in the council than in the field, and could plan better than he could execute. There were about all his operations a hesitation and a lack of vigor which are unknown to a great soldier, and when one considers the advantages his army possessed over that of his adversary, it is surprising that he did not accomplish more. There can be no doubt, however, that

he gradually improved as time wore on, and, from the promise which the closing days of his career gave, his admirers certainly have good grounds for believing that his campaign in the fall of 1862 would have been marked by more ability than he ever displayed. Besides this, he had the quality of attaching his troops to him and arousing their warmest enthusiasm for him, a quality which only a good soldier can possess.

The task before General McClellan was similar to that which had occupied General Johnston during the fall of 1861. The Federal army was in a disorganized condition, and it was necessary, first of all, to breathe new life into it. Unlike General Johnston, however, General McClellan could rely upon his Government to sustain him to the utmost in the task before him. The Northern President wisely left the work of reorganization to the man he had chosen for it, and responded liberally and promptly to every demand made upon him. The result was what would have happened to the Southern army had Mr. Davis been less vain and intolerant.

General McClellan assumed the command of the army on the 27th of July, 1861. It numbered then a little over fifty-one thousand men, including less than one thousand cavalry, and was provided with nine field batteries of thirty pieces. It had lost almost the semblance of military organization, and was being rapidly thinned by desertion. He set to work vigorously, and soon checked the desertions. He procured the passage of a law by Congress, authorizing the President to relieve from command incompetent officers, and during the fall got rid of several hundred of this class. The new recruits were at once put to work to learn their profession, and the regiments, brigades, and divisions were systematically organized. Fortunately for the United States, there remained in the regular service a number of educated artillery officers, and these were put to work, not, as in the Southern army, to learn other branches of

the service, but to organizing and drilling the artillery, where they were most useful. With equal energy the engineer service was created and improved. The staff also was organized upon a more useful plan than the Southern Executive saw fit to adopt. When the Army of the Potomac took the field in 1862, it numbered (including all its branches) two hundred and twenty-one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-seven men, of all arms (counting twenty-five regiments of cavalry), and was provided with ninety-two batteries of five hundred and twenty guns, and with an engineer corps, and trains, and bridge equipage adequate for a first-class army. Its Commissariat and Quartermaster's departments were also well organized, and ably administered.

In accomplishing this task, General McClellan exhibited not only great administrative ability, but also great genius. To him the Army of the Potomac was indebted throughout the war for the organization and discipline which sustained it amid its heaviest reverses, and this, if nothing else, should entitle him to its gratitude. It is true that he enjoyed a great advantage over General Johnston, in having a Government willing and anxious to sustain him in his labors, and that he had many more resources to draw upon than the Confederates possessed, but still he is entitled to unstinted praise for the masterly ability with which he performed the work.

In October the Army of the Potomac was ready for active service, and its condition and discipline were such as to induce the North to expect success for it. During the process of creating it, the people and Government of the North had refrained from urging a premature commencement of hostilities, but as soon as it was known that it was ready for the field, there was manifested a very decided desire for something decisive before the winter should render active operations impossible.

The Army of Northern Virginia, during this time, lay in the

neighborhood of Centreville, with its outposts pushed forward as far as Mason's, Munson's, and Upton's Hills, from which points its colors could be seen, and its drums heard at Washington. This species of bravado was as galling to the North as it was gratifying to the South, and the press and Government strongly urged General McClellan to put a stop to it. A little later, the blockade of the Potomac created no slight indignation in the North, and the people became still more urgent for a forward movement upon General McClellan's part.

Influenced by this state of affairs, General McClellan, about the middle of October, seriously entertained the plan of advancing upon Manassas. Even if he had left half of his force in garrison at Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis, and along the line of the Potomac, he would have had a column for active operations of about seventy-five thousand men, — thirty thousand more than the Confederates could muster. The weather was unusually favorable for his advance, and the roads were in better condition than they had been at that season for several years.

There was much to be gained by such a course. With the army at his command, he could have reasonably counted on fighting with a fair prospect of success, and had General Johnston retired from Centreville to the line of the Rapidan, which he assuredly would have done, in consequence of the condition in which his Government had placed him,* the moral effect at the North would have been powerful. General McClellan seems to have appreciated this, for in his report he thus speaks of the results that might follow such a movement: —

“Assuming the success of this operation, and the defeat of the enemy as certain, the question at once arises as to the importance of the results gained. I think these results would be confined to the possession of the field of battle, the evacuation

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 73.

of the line of the Upper Potomac by the enemy, and the moral effect of the victory; important results, it is true, but not decisive of the war, nor securing the destruction of the enemy's main army, for he could fall back upon other positions, and fight us again and again, should the condition of his troops permit."*

Certainly if General McClellan considered these advantages within his grasp, and that he did is proved by his own words, he was most culpable in not trying to secure them. Had General Johnston regarded it as possible to gain such advantages over McClellan, the effort would have been made. More than this, the Federal commander would have silenced and satisfied his Government and people by such a success, and could have entered upon the spring campaign with the prestige which he lost by his backwardness.

The plan was suffered to lie over, however, and the fall and winter were spent in idleness. This, as it happened, was no gain to the South, as the Confederate Government would not take advantage of the delay thus granted it. Meantime General McClellan had turned his attention to another plan of operations, namely, a movement of his army to the Lower Chesapeake, and an advance upon Richmond from that direction. His imagination pictured to him a brilliant plan of operations in this quarter, which he stated as follows, in a letter to the Secretary of War:—

“A movement in force on that line, obliges the enemy to abandon his intrenched line at Manassas, in order to hasten to cover Richmond and Norfolk. He must do this; for, should he permit us to occupy Richmond, his destruction can be averted only by entirely defeating us in a battle in which he must be the assailant. This movement, if successful, gives us the Capital, the communications, the supplies of the Rebels. Norfolk

* McClellan's Official Report. (Sheldon & Co.'s Edition.) p. 103.

would fall; all the waters of the Chesapeake would be ours; all Virginia would be in our power, and the enemy forced to abandon Tennessee and North Carolina. * * Should we be beaten in a battle, we have a perfectly secure retreat down the Peninsula upon Fort Monroe, with our flank perfectly covered by the fleet. During our whole movement our left flank is covered by the water; our right is secure, for the reason that the enemy is too distant to reach us in time; he can only oppose us in front; we bring our fleet into full play. After a successful battle, our position would be, Burnside forming our left, Norfolk held securely, our centre connecting Burnside with Buell, both by Raleigh and Lynchburg. Buell in Eastern Tennessee and Northern Alabama, Halleck at Nashville and Memphis. The next movement would be to connect with Sherman on the left, by reducing Wilmington and Charleston; to advance our centre into South Carolina and Georgia; to push Buell either towards Montgomery, or to unite with the main army in Georgia; to throw Halleck southward to meet the naval expedition from New Orleans. We should then be in a condition to reduce, at our leisure, all the Southern seaports; to occupy all the avenues of communication; to use the great outlets of the Mississippi; to reëstablish our government and arms in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas; to force the slaves to labor for our subsistence, instead of that of the rebels; to bid defiance to all foreign interference."

Such was the magnificent future which "The Young Napoleon" saw before him. He proposed to accomplish all this by landing his army on the Rappahannock, at or near Urbana, marching to West Point at the head of the York, and from there to Richmond. He was willing, however, if circumstances prohibited his using Urbana as his base, to land at Mob Jack Bay, or, "the worst coming to the worst," to take Fort Monroe as a base, so anxious was he to attack Richmond from the east.

This plan was laid before President Lincoln and his Cabinet early in the year 1862. It met with decided opposition from the first. Mr. Lincoln and his advisers were afraid to withdraw the army from in front of the Capital, lest the Southern commander should seize the opportunity to make a dash upon the city. Mr. Lincoln favored the plan of a flank movement on Manassas for this reason, and also because it would save time, and at that period prompt action was urgently demanded by the people. Both the President's plan and that of General McClellan were meritorious, but the former promised more in its effect upon the country, a consideration at that time of the highest importance. Mr. Lincoln requested the General to state wherein the move to the Peninsula was to be preferred to a march upon Manassas. This request was complied with in the letter from which I have already quoted. The President then set aside the plan, and ordered a direct movement upon Manassas on or before the 22d of February. General McClellan continued to urge his plan, and Mr. Lincoln rescinded his order, and directed that a sufficient number of transports should be procured to convey the army to the Lower Chesapeake. Still he was not satisfied, and, although he had sanctioned the proposed change of base, on the 8th of March he issued an order prescribing the conditions upon which it should take place, which were that the movement should begin as early as the 18th of the month; that no change should be made without leaving for the protection of Washington such a force as would, in the opinion of the General-in-Chief and the commanders of army corps, render the city entirely secure; and that no more than fifty thousand men should be moved *en route* for a new base of operations until the Potomac should be cleared of the Southern batteries and all other obstructions, or until the President should thereafter give express permission.*

* McClellan's Report. p. 117.

This was sheer trifling on the part of the Government, and was highly embarrassing to General McClellan. Mr. Lincoln should either have required of that officer unqualified obedience to his order, or his resignation, if he did not intend to support him cordially in the Chesapeake movement. This, however, he did not do, but caused still more embarrassment by dividing the Army of the Potomac into four *corps d'armée*, and appointing as their commanders officers whom General McClellan would not have chosen, and whom he did not think qualified for such important positions.

Matters had assumed this condition when all parties were startled by the news from Manassas.

III.

GENERAL JOHNSTON FALLS BACK.

I have already mentioned that the maladministration of the Commissary-General prevented General Johnston from attempting offensive operations. He was fully aware that it was a great error to leave McClellan in peace to complete the organization of his forces. The true policy of the Confederates lay in compelling the Federal commander to fight before he was ready, and in hindering and crippling the organization of his army as much as possible. So fully did General Johnston appreciate this, that, in concert with General Beauregard and Major-General G. W. Smith, he drew up a plan for an offensive movement, which was submitted to Mr. Davis during one of his visits to headquarters.

This plan proposed the immediate concentration, in the neighborhood of Manassas, of the greater portion of the forces scattered along the seacoast, and through Lower Virginia, which,

added to the force already on the Potomac, would constitute a large and efficient army. With this army it was proposed to inaugurate a campaign north of the Potomac before General McClellan should have his army ready for the field. It was believed that the positions thus weakened would not be endangered, as it was almost absolutely certain that the enemy would call in their detached forces as rapidly as possible to meet the movement; but even if some points on the coast should be lost, the disaster would be more than counterbalanced by the gain north of the Potomac.

The plan was a good one, and in perfect accord with the soundest principles of military science. No better opportunity for an invasion of the enemy's country could be desired; indeed as good an opportunity never occurred again. Had the plan been carried out, there can be no doubt that the Confederate army would have wintered on the Susquehanna, and that the spring campaign would have opened in Pennsylvania instead of Virginia. Then some of the disasters of 1862, if not all of them, would have been unknown.*

The President, however, could not be induced to give his consent to the scheme. He was too thoroughly wedded to the policy of dispersion to be willing to risk the loss of some petty, insignificant coast town, even though Baltimore or Philadelphia might be gained by it. He gravely proposed, as a substitute, the following:

The Maryland shore, opposite the Confederate batteries at Evansport, was held by a single weak division under General Sickles. The Potomac is at this point about two miles wide, and above and below the batteries lay the Federal war steamers, and many sailing craft. The only way in which the Con-

* This plan is substantially that which was proposed to the Confederate Government by Stonewall Jackson, only, however, to be treated with silent disdain. Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, pp. 86, 87, 88.

federates could pass the river was by means of row-boats, and of these but a very limited number could be had. Mr. Davis proposed to make a descent upon Sickles' command, capture it, and bring off the prisoners. This remarkable plan, which would have resulted in the capture or destruction of the entire attacking force, was, of course, at once condemned by the able soldiers to whom it was proposed. It was dropped, and the President went back to Richmond, having destroyed the best chance the South ever had for a successful campaign in the enemy's country.

The autumn and winter wore away, the army still remaining on the defensive. McClellan's evident disinclination to attack him convinced General Johnston that the next attempt of the Federals would be made nearer Richmond, and his quick eye at once designated the Rappahannock as the locality from which the blow would be struck. Early in 1862, therefore, he resolved to abandon his position at Manassas, and occupy the line of the Rappahannock. This would not only ruin his adversary's plan of campaign, but would bring his own army within easier communication with its base, and render it less exposed to having its supplies intercepted by hostile raiding parties.

Accordingly, in February, he commenced to remove the heavy guns from his works on Bull Run and the Potomac, and to send them, together with such public property as was worth carrying off, behind the Rappahannock. The works were supplied, in lieu of artillery, with wooden logs and pieces of stove-pipe, which harmless weapons are known as "quaker guns," and held thus until everything was in readiness.

The army was now about fifty thousand strong. Of this number General Jackson had six thousand with him in the Valley of Virginia, leaving forty-four thousand under General Johnston's immediate command. The forces at Leesburg and Evansport were called in, and on the 8th of March 1862, the

army withdrew from Manassas, and moved towards the Rappahannock, destroying all the bridges after it.

General Scott once declared that Joe Johnston's retreats were equal to victories. 'So well was this affair managed, that the enemy did not suspect it until the next day, when it was revealed to them by the smoke of the huts which the Confederates had fired upon their abandonment of them. General McClellan, upon being informed that Johnston had retreated, attempted no pursuit, doubtless feeling sure that his wary adversary was too far away to be reached successfully; but, in order to give his troops some experience in marching and bivouacking, advanced his whole army to Manassas on the 10th, having occupied the place on the 9th with two regiments of cavalry, under Colonel Averill. A few days later a reconnoissance, under General Stoneman, was made in the direction of Johnston's new position, but the wretched state of the roads prevented Stoneman from proceeding beyond Cedar Run. Leaving Sumner to hold Manassas with his corps, McClellan withdrew the main body of his army on the 11th, and returned to Alexandria. Sumner was soon relieved, but before this was done a strong body of infantry, under General Howard, advanced to the Rappahannock on a reconnoissance.

In the meantime General Johnston had caused careful surveys of the country to be made, and now, finding that the line of the Rapidan afforded a better defensive position than that of the Rappahannock, withdrew his army behind the former stream.

The "capture" of Manassas, as it was termed, was represented to the Northern people by their press as a decided gain. In its results it undoubtedly was, for it brought with it the abandonment of the blockade of the Potomac. The reader, however, will remember that all this was voluntarily relinquished by the Confederates, who were more than compensated

for it by the greater advantages of their new position, and the destruction of General McClellan's favorite plan of operations. Clearly the real advantage lay with General Johnston.

IV.

THE MOVE TO THE PENINSULA.

The evacuation of Manassas, and the occupation of the line of the Rappahannock, and afterwards that of the Rapidan, by General Johnston, showed General McClellan that his designs were understood and foiled. The new Southern line covered the approaches to Richmond in that quarter, and Urbana and Mob Jack Bay were no longer available. In the opinion of the Federal commander there now remained nothing but the move to the Peninsula, which he had declared ought to be adopted only in case the worst came to the worst, and which promised results less brilliant and decisive than the other plans,* and this he now decided to attempt.

He submitted the matter to a Council of his Corps Commanders at Fairfax Court House, on the 13th of March. They approved it, provided the Merrimac (Virginia) which had just appeared in Hampton Roads, could be neutralized; that means could be at once procured for the transfer of the army from Alexandria down the Potomac to the new base; that a naval force strong enough to silence the batteries on York River could be had; and that Washington could be rendered safe by leaving a strong column for its protection. The proceedings of the Council were laid before the President, and sanctioned by him, he adding to the conditions enumerated, another — that Manassas Junction should be occupied by a

* McClellan's Report, p. 128.

force sufficient to prevent its capture by the Confederates. General McClellan at once began his preparations for his change of base.

The Federal plan of campaign was as follows. The main army, one hundred and twenty thousand strong, under General McClellan, was to embark at Washington and Alexandria, and occupy the Peninsula, using Fort Monroe as a base in its advance against Richmond. McDowell's corps, forty thousand strong, was to follow McClellan as soon as possible, and this force he designed for a bold flank movement against the Confederates, should they attempt to hold the Peninsula. Banks was to occupy Manassas and cover Washington with his corps, forty thousand strong. Fremont, who commanded in Western Virginia, and had under him a force of about thirty thousand men, was to descend from the mountains, and march upon the Southern Capital from the North. Such a combination, it was believed, would be irresistible, and Richmond would fall in the course of a few months.

General McClellan was about this time deprived of the chief command of all the armies of the Union, which he had held since the retirement of General Scott, and directed to give his attention exclusively to the Army of the Potomac. A few days before he left the Potomac, Blenker's division (ten thousand men) was detached from his army, and ordered to join Fremont.

The energy displayed by the Federal government, in providing transportation for its army, was prodigious. Between the 27th of February and the 16th of March "no fewer than four hundred steamers and sailing craft" were collected at Washington and Alexandria, and upon them were transported to Fortress Monroe "an army of one hundred and twenty-one thousand, five hundred men, fourteen thousand, five hundred and ninety-two animals, forty-four batteries, and the wagons

and ambulances, pontoon-trains, telegraph materials, and enormous equipage required for an army of such magnitude." * The embarkation commenced on the 17th of March, and in the course of a few weeks the army was safely transported, with the loss of but eight mules and nine barges. Such an undertaking had never before been accomplished with as much speed and success, and it reflects the highest credit upon General McClellan and Assistant Secretary of War, Tucker, who directed it.

In going to the Peninsula, after declaring that such a course should be pursued only in case the worst came to the worst, General McClellan committed a grave fault. Napoleon has well said that, "A General is culpable who undertakes the execution of a plan which he considers faulty." Having pronounced such a decision upon the move to the Peninsula, I repeat, General McClellan should not have made it. For my own part I do not consider the plan finally adopted by him "faulty." It contained much that was commendable, and had it been executed with boldness and decision, it would have been spared much of the failure which befell it. The hesitation and weakness of the Federal commander during the campaign, and not his plan of operations, were the causes of many of his reverses. Still, as he himself regarded the plan as defective, it was not good generalship to attempt to execute it.

On the 1st of April, General McClellan embarked with the headquarters, on the steamer *Commodore*, and reached Fortress Monroe on the afternoon of the next day.

In the meantime, General Johnston, who had been watching the movements of the Federal commander, had been gradually drawing his army nearer to Richmond, feeling assured that it would be needed there. Finally, the Confederate Government having resolved to make a stand on the Peninsula, General

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 100.

Johnston put his army in motion for the lines of Yorktown. It commenced to pass through Richmond on the 5th of April, and by the 7th the vanguard had reached Magruder's position.

V.

A GOOD FIGHT.

Lying to the southeast of Richmond, and between that city and the Chesapeake Bay, is a narrow neck of land enclosed between the James and York rivers, and known as the Peninsula. Properly speaking, it terminates at West Point, the head of York River, but since 1862 the term has been applied to all the region between Richmond and the Bay, lying between the Pamunkey and the York, and the James rivers. There is a railroad from Richmond to West Point, the York being navigable to its head for large vessels; and several good roads diverge from the city to the various points on the Peninsula, terminating finally at Fortress Monroe.

It was believed by the Confederate authorities from the outset, that the enemy would attempt to reach the Capital from this direction, and a small force was sent to Yorktown in May 1861, by the State of Virginia, for the protection of this region, and the command was given to Colonel John B. Magruder, who by the new year had been advanced to the grade of Major General. With his little band, Magruder fortified the Peninsula at various points, and during the period intervening between the battle of Bethel, and McClellan's arrival at Fortress Monroe, succeeded in keeping the Federals confined to their intrenched camps at Newport News, and Hampton. His force was at first only three thousand strong, and never amounted to

more than fifteen thousand. The enemy could generally muster a larger army, and the strategy to which Magruder was obliged to resort was original as well as successful.

Just in sight of the Federal pickets at Newport News was a clump of woods. The road left it abruptly, and, passing in full view of the enemy's works, reëntered it at a point lower down. At frequent intervals Magruder would issue a stirring battle-order, and start in the direction of the enemy. Arriving at the point where the road left the woods, he would keep his men marching for hours along its exposed portion, all the while moving them in a circle. In this way he constantly deceived the enemy as to his strength, which they estimated at twice what it really was, and as they did not feel strong enough to meet him, they remained within their own lines. General Magruder's policy was to avoid a general engagement, and in this, as I have said, he was successful. His constant change of position also did much to preserve the health of his troops, which was one of his principal objects, as he was operating in the most unhealthy section of Virginia.

General Magruder prepared as his real line of defence, positions in advance at Harwood's and Young's Mills. Both flanks of this line were defended by bogs and streams which were almost impassable, and also by the fortifications at Ship Point on the left, and those at the mouth of the Warwick River and at Mulberry Island Point, on the right. It was believed by General Magruder that with twenty-five thousand troops, this line, with its flank defences, could be held against any force the enemy could muster.* As his command was too small to attempt this, he caused a second line to be constructed on Warwick River.

The Warwick River rises in a succession of salt marshes about a mile and a half to the right of Yorktown. Here, and

*General Magruder's Report of the Peninsula Campaign.

for some distance farther to the left, it is merely a sluggish, boggy stream, and runs through a country densely wooded and containing many difficult swamps. Along this river were two dams, one at Wynne's Mill, and the other at Lee's Mill. Three more were constructed by General Magruder. These dams raised the headwaters of the stream so high that it was for three-fourths of its course impracticable for either infantry or artillery.

Along this river General Magruder constructed his second line. The left rested on the York River at Yorktown, which was strongly fortified. Heavy redoubts, "united by long curtains, and flanked by rifle pits," extended from Yorktown to the headwaters of the Warwick, and from the latter point to Wynne's and Lee's Mills and the artificial dams, each of these points being protected by extensive earthworks well supplied with artillery. The right was at Mulberry Island, on the James, and was united to Lee's Mill by a series of works similar to those already described. From a short distance below Lee's Mill to the mouth of the stream, the Warwick was guarded by the Southern gunboats. The Lower James was protected by the Confederate iron-clad steamer *Virginia*, and the left of the line was still further defended by the fortifications at Gloucester Point on the north side of the York. This line was thirteen and a half miles in length, but, owing to the withdrawal from General Magruder of a thousand negroes who had been at work on it, it was incomplete when McClellan reached Old Point.

In March, 1862, the Army of the Peninsula numbered fifteen thousand men. Only a few days before the campaign opened, thirty-five hundred were detached by the Government, and sent to General Randolph, at Suffolk, Virginia. This left General Magruder but eleven thousand five hundred men, of all arms. Of these he was compelled to place in garrison at

Gloucester Point, Yorktown, and Mulberry Island, six thousand men, which during the ensuing campaign could not be withdrawn from those places. For the defence of the remainder of his line, — thirteen miles in length, — General Magruder could collect only five thousand five hundred men. Slight detachments of this little band, for purposes of observation, held the first line, with orders to fall back to the second if the enemy appeared in force.

This was the condition of affairs on the Peninsula on the 2d of April, 1862.

When General McClellan reached Fortress Monroe, fifty-eight thousand infantry and one hundred pieces of artillery had arrived there. With this force he left Old Point on the 4th of April, for the purpose of attacking Magruder. His design was to move in two columns up the Peninsula. The first, consisting of three divisions (Porter's, Hamilton's, and Sedgwick's), and one regiment of cavalry, under General Heintzelman, was to move direct upon Yorktown, by the road leading from Hampton to that place. With this column it was hoped to take Magruder by surprise, and drive him from his intrenchments. The second column, consisting of two divisions (Smith's and Couch's), and the Fifth Regular Cavalry, under General Keyes, was to move by the James River road, cross the Warwick at Lee's Mill, and occupy the Halfway House on the road between Yorktown and Williamsburg, in the rear of Magruder's position. In consequence of the imperfect nature of the maps with which he was furnished, General McClellan was ignorant of the existence of the works to the right of Wynne's Mill, and supposed that Magruder had left the road to his rear open by failing to protect the crossing at Lee's Mill. He hoped, by occupying the Halfway House, and making a vigorous attack on Yorktown, to force Magruder either to capitulate or take the chances of being cut to pieces. Thus he expected by rapid

movements to drive the Confederates before him, or capture them, open the James River, and press on to Richmond before the city could be reënforced from other quarters. It was a good plan, but it seems strange that General McClellan should have taken it for granted that so old a soldier as Magruder would leave the road to his rear so completely at the mercy of his enemies. It was not until the afternoon of the 4th of April that General Keyes learned that Lee's Mill was held by the Confederates, and even then McClellan supposed it would be an easy matter to put them to flight.

The Southern detachments at Ship Point, Harwood's and Young's Mills, fell back before the advancing Federal columns, and rejoined their main body at Yorktown. General Magruder hoped the enemy would halt at his first line, and thus give him more time, but as they continued to advance, he boldly prepared to resist them. It was, at this time, of the highest importance that his line should be held, and though he could bring but so small a force to the task, he characteristically resolved to maintain his position, or sell it as dearly as possible. By placing in the redoubts only enough men to manage the artillery, and "stringing" his infantry along the rifle-pits, he barely contrived to make his five thousand men cover his line. It was a bold step, but it was necessary. The odds were fearful, and had McClellan possessed the determination which won Marlborough the lines of Mehaigne and Bouchain, nothing could have saved the heroic army of the Peninsula from destruction or capture.

Early in the afternoon of the 5th, the column of General Heintzelman was brought to a halt before Yorktown, while that of Keyes was, almost simultaneously, unexpectedly checked by the works at Lee's Mill. Finding the Southern line stronger than he had anticipated, McClellan threw forward his whole force in a vigorous effort to discover the real strength and position of Magruder. This was continued with unabated vigor on

the 6th and 7th, and during these days the gunboats in York River kept up a sharp fire on the works at Yorktown. The result was that General McClellan was convinced "that it was best to prepare for an assault, by the preliminary employment of heavy guns, and some siege operations. Instant assault would have been simple folly."* He was not alone in this opinion. General Keyes declared Magruder's line to be "one of the strongest ever opposed to an invading force in any country," and believed that the troops then under McClellan could not carry it.†

These were trying days to the Army of the Peninsula and its brave commander. The line was so long and the army so weak that it required more than ordinary energy and resolution in both to hold their ground. In spite of the odds against them, they did so, and they have their highest encomium in the language of the Federal commander which I have quoted.

VI.

THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

The first attempts of the Federal army to feel the Southern position were thus repulsed, but General Magruder was by no means sure that the immediate danger was over. He could not be aware of the result of the good fight his men had made, and energetically prepared to receive another attack. The troops slept in the trenches and under arms. Still no attack was made. Several days passed away, and yet McClellan made no advance. Magruder was perplexed, but his mind was soon relieved. "In every direction in front of the Southern lines,

* McClellan's Report (Sheldon & Co.'s Edition.) p. 162.

† McClellan's Report (Sheldon and Co.'s Edition.) pp. 165, 166, 167, 168.

through the intervening woods, and along the open fields, earth-works began to appear." General McClellan had laid siege to Yorktown.

It was almost incredible, but it was nevertheless true. An army of fifty-eight thousand men and one hundred guns had been repulsed by five thousand men, and forced to resort to the tedious delay of a siege. Had General McClellan massed his troops and made a bold and determined dash at any part of the Southern line on the 5th, 6th, or 7th of April, he could have broken through it. Surely, if lines of equal strength could be carried when held by superior force, as in the days of Marlborough and the "Old Masters" of the Art of War, it was possible for such an army as McClellan's to overwhelm the devoted few who opposed them on these memorable days.

Meanwhile General Johnston had been sending his troops to Magruder as rapidly as the limited transportation at his command would permit. The advance guard arrived on the 7th, and by the 17th, on which day General Johnston himself reached Yorktown, his whole army had joined Magruder. Troops were also sent to the Peninsula from Norfolk, and by the 20th of April the force under General Johnston was about fifty-three thousand strong, exclusive of some four or five thousand cavalry.

McClellan's troops continued to arrive. By the 30th of April the Army of the Potomac had one hundred and fifteen thousand three hundred and fifty men present for duty,* together with about two hundred and fifty pieces of artillery.

When General McClellan left the Potomac, he had been promised that McDowell's corps should be sent to him entire. With this, he intended, after reaching the Peninsula, to attempt to flank the Confederate position if he found it too strong to be carried by a direct assault. His intention was to land this

* McClellan's Report, p. 53.

corps in the rear of Gloucester Point; and, by turning that position and occupying West Point with it, compel the Confederates to fall back from Yorktown. After he left the Potomac, however, the sudden dash of Stonewall Jackson upon Banks at Kernstown, rendered the Federal Government so uneasy for the safety of Washington, that it was decided to retain Banks in the Valley, and keep McDowell's corps on the Rappahannock for the protection of the Capital. This was a great disappointment to General McClellan, but it need not have been so severe a blow to him as he made it. He had over one hundred thousand men with him, and he might have easily executed the manœuvre he had intended for McDowell with twenty-five thousand or thirty thousand of this force, and have had left a column of seventy-five thousand or seventy thousand men for a vigorous pursuit if Johnston evacuated Yorktown, as he assuredly would have done. Therefore, it was simply the lack of a great soldier's daring that prevented the Federal commander from executing this manœuvre, which General Johnston confidently expected to the last.

Frequent reconnoissances satisfied McClellan that Dam No. 1, the centre of the Southern line, was the weakest point in it. It was so situated that but one gun could be brought to bear on the enemy. On the 16th of April he crossed a strong force at this point. A brisk engagement ensued, in which the Confederates were, at first, worsted; but at length, having been reënforced, they drove the Federals back across the river, inflicting a considerable loss upon them. General McClellan was urged to make another effort to force the line here, but declined to do so, and thus lost another opportunity of severely damaging his adversary.

The month of April wore on, the Federals working away at their approaches, and the Confederates strengthening their position. Constant skirmishing occurred along the lines, but nothing of a decisive nature took place.

The spring was very wet and disagreeable, and the Peninsula, naturally marshy, was rendered nearly one general bog. The troops were almost entirely without shelter, and in many instances, their camps were located, unavoidably, in places where a dry spot could not be found. This caused great suffering and much sickness. The hardest service was performed by those who held the trenches. The proximity of the Federal army made it necessary that the whole line should be manned as fully as possible. The enemy's sharpshooters were in many instances so near that it was certain death for any one to show his head above the works. This rendered it impossible for the men in these places to stand erect, and, when not actually engaged in repelling an attack, they were forced to sit down in the trenches. During all this time they were literally, not figuratively, in mud and water up to their knees. They had scarcely any food, and what was furnished them had to be passed along the trenches from man to man, under a constant and heavy fire of shells and musketry. They had no stimulants, not even the execrable sassafras tea with which their comrades, farther in the rear, regaled themselves, in the absence of other beverages. For twenty-nine days they endured these horrible sufferings, — sufferings which those who did not witness them can hardly appreciate, — and yet they never murmured. I, myself, saw them, covered with mud and almost famished, crawl away from the front when relieved, many of them so stiff from the effects of the cold and wet, and their cramped posture in the trenches, as to be unable to walk erect. Surely, no greater proof of their powers of endurance, or their heroic devotion to their cause was ever given by any army than by this.

At an early day General Johnston had requested the Confederate Government to withdraw Magruder's command from Yorktown to a less exposed point nearer the Capital, and when

General Lee was assigned to duty at Richmond he urged the same course. In the opinion of these officers any line beyond the head of the York was unsafe, as it was always in the power of the enemy to penetrate to its rear, cut it off from Richmond, and capture the troops. This might be done by marching across from the Bay to West Point, and seizing the roads leading to the Capital, or by throwing a column up the York to West Point, or up the James to the rear of Williamsburg, which the naval superiority of the Federals made a possible undertaking. The Virginia was by no means so formidable as the enemy had come to believe, and it was not at all certain that she would be successful in a second encounter with her rival, the Monitor. Besides this, she was so unseaworthy as to be useless in moderately rough weather. The Government, however, declined to take the step urged upon it until the arrival of McClellan on the Peninsula opened its eyes to the danger which threatened it. Then it was too late to act promptly. The evacuation of Yorktown involved also the abandonment of Norfolk, and it was necessary to hold the former until the latter could be dismantled. This is why it was required of Magruder to expose his little army to almost certain destruction or capture, and they owed their deliverance to their own valor and General McClellan's weakness, and not to the wisdom or foresight of President Davis. Had the advice of General Johnston been heeded at first, the losses and sacrifices which occurred between Yorktown and the Chickahominy would have been avoided.

A personal inspection of the position satisfied General Johnston of the correctness of his views, and confirmed him in his determination to retire towards Richmond as soon as such a step could be taken. Magruder's line was very strong, but not impregnable, and it was within the power of McClellan at any moment to cut him off from Richmond. The roads up the

Peninsula were in a bad condition, and the Confederate transportation by both land and water was very limited, rendering it difficult to supply the army. Another advantage to be gained by falling back to Richmond, was that McClellan would be drawn some distance inland, away from the support of his fleet, thus placing it in the power of the Confederates to assume the offensive should they see fit, which was utterly impossible anywhere below West Point.

Thus it happened that while McClellan was busily employed in pushing forward his preparations for an assault, General Johnston was rapidly getting ready to leave the Peninsula. He sent off everything that could be carried away. It was not possible to remove the heavy guns from the works at Yorktown without rousing the suspicions of the enemy, but the field artillery was sent to Williamsburg on the night of the 1st of May, and its place supplied, as at Manassas and Centreville, with quaker guns. The retreat was to have been begun on the night of the 2nd, and the army broke up its camp at sunset on that day, but the movement was deferred until the next night.

In order to lull McClellan's suspicions, a furious cannonade was opened upon his lines from every heavy gun on the works at Yorktown. At dusk, under the cover of this fire, the troops silently left the works they had held so successfully, and filed off swiftly along the two roads leading, the one from Yorktown and the other from Lee's Mill, to Fort Magruder, in front of Williamsburg, which was reached by three o'clock the next morning, the sky, red with the lurid flashes of the guns at Yorktown, telling them that the first stage of their withdrawal had been successfully accomplished.

VII.

THE RETREAT UP THE PENINSULA.

General McClellan had determined to open his batteries on the Confederate line on the morning of the 6th of May. He had prepared them with skill, and he was sure that the terrible fire which he would hurl upon the earthworks in his front would be more than human nature could endure. The Confederates would be compelled to abandon their works, and flee up the Peninsula, pursued by his victorious legions. Then Richmond would crown his labors.

These pleasant anticipations were cut short on Sunday morning May 4th, by the announcement that the Confederates had abandoned their position during the night. All his skilful and costly preparations were now useless. The prize had eluded his grasp just as he believed himself about to clutch it.

The Federal army immediately occupied the abandoned works of the Confederates, and McClellan threw forward the cavalry and four batteries of horse artillery in pursuit of General Johnston. Hooker's and Smith's divisions were also advanced towards Williamsburg, and were soon followed by Kearney's, Couch's and Casey's. Franklin's division was embarked on transports and pushed up the York River to West Point, with the hope of intercepting the Confederates. The direction of the pursuit towards Williamsburg was entrusted to General Sumner, while General McClellan remained at Yorktown to hasten the embarkation of Franklin's troops, as the movement of this latter body was of the first importance.

General McClellan announced to his Government the retreat of the Confederates, in the following dispatch.

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 4, 9 A. M.

“TO HON. EDWIN M. STANTON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

“We have the ramparts. Have guns, ammunition, camp equipage, &c. We hold the entire line of his works, which the engineers report as being very strong. I have thrown all my cavalry and horse artillery in pursuit, supported by infantry. I move Franklin’s division, and as much more as I can transport by water, up to West Point to-day. No time shall be lost. The gunboats have gone up York River. I omitted to state that Gloucester is also in our possession. I shall push the enemy to the wall.

G. B. McCLELLAN, *Major-General*.*

The “*capture*” of Yorktown was made the most of by the Federals. They had, however, very little to boast of, as they had been held in check for two weeks by five thousand men, and forced to lay siege to the place. Then the evacuation had been conducted at General Johnston’s leisure, and he had left them only his deserted works, and such things as it was impossible to remove. True they secured a large number of heavy guns, but that was all of importance, and but for the folly of the Southern Government in refusing to heed the advice of Johnston and Lee when first offered, these too might have been saved. They were, however, but a poor offset to the immense labor and expense to which McClellan had been put in conducting the siege. Clearly the Union commander had nothing to be proud of.

Upon reaching Williamsburg, General Johnston halted, in order to allow his trains to push on towards Richmond. The roads were in bad condition, and their progress was necessarily

* For some reason best known to himself, General McClellan has failed to reproduce this bulletin in his report.

slow. After a brief halt, the main body of the army continued the retreat. The rear guard, consisting of Longstreet's division, held the works in front of Williamsburg during Sunday the 4th of May.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, the column under General Stoneman appeared in front of Fort Magruder, the centre of Longstreet's line. A sharp artillery fire was opened on it, and an indecisive skirmish occurred between the cavalry and artillery of the enemy and a part of Longstreet's force, lasting during the afternoon, and resulting in the former withdrawing into the woods.

During the afternoon it became evident to General Johnston that a large body of infantry was being massed in his front, and Longstreet's division was disposed so as to cover all the approaches to Williamsburg.

The force which was collected before Williamsburg, was the command of General Sumner. By daylight on the morning of the 5th, the divisions of Smith and Hooker had joined the cavalry. Couch and Casey were delayed until one o'clock in the afternoon, by the roads. Hooker opened the battle at half past seven in the morning, by a sharp attack on Fort Magruder. He was met with spirit, and driven back, by 9 A. M., with the loss of five guns. Kearney's division now coming up checked the progress of the Confederates, and saved Hooker from a still greater punishment. During the day the enemy were repulsed at all points save on the extreme left. On that flank were a couple of redoubts which commanded the Southern left and centre. Owing to some unpardonable carelessness, General Johnston had not been informed of the existence of these works, and consequently they were unoccupied when Hancock approached them. He instantly took possession of them, and seeing his advantage, sent urgent requests for reinforcements to enable him to take the Southern line in reverse,

and cut the communication of the troops engaged with Hooker and Kearney. Had he been supported as he should have been, the battle would have resulted in a Federal victory.

The first intimation General Johnston had of the existence of these important works, was the information that the Federals held them, and were threatening his rear. He at once despatched a force to drive the enemy out, but Hancock repulsed the attacks made upon him, and only relinquished his advantage when ordered by General Sumner to fall back to his original position.

The battle ended at sunset. The enemy suffered a loss of four hundred and fifty-six killed, fourteen hundred wounded, and three hundred and seventy-two missing. Total, two thousand two hundred and twenty-eight; and nine pieces of artillery. The Confederate total loss was eighteen hundred. Several guns and caissons, which could not be carried off for want of horses, were rendered worthless, and abandoned.

General Johnston had fought at Williamsburg simply to hold McClellan in check until his trains could reach a place of safety. This he accomplished, as has been seen, with the rear guard only. There was now no further necessity for remaining at Fort Magruder, and during the night of the 5th the army fell back from Williamsburg, and took the route to the Chickahominy. The bad roads and the lack of transportation rendered it impossible to remove the wounded, and they were left in the town, where they fell into the hands of the Federals the next day.

Franklin's division ascended the York to West Point, and effected a landing under the cover of their gunboats at Eltham's Landing. General Johnston, however, was not to be caught thus. He had provided against this movement on the part of McClellan by sending Whiting's division towards the mouth of the Pamunkey. On the 7th of May, Whiting en-

countered Franklin near where he had landed, and after a stubborn fight drove him back to the river, and forced him to take refuge under the fire of his gunboats. Whiting's loss was about three hundred killed and wounded. He took one hundred and twenty-six prisoners. The enemy's loss in killed and wounded is unknown to me.

The enemy claimed the victory in both fights — Williamsburg and Eltham's Landing; but in each McClellan was unsuccessful. At Williamsburg his pursuit was brought to a summary end, and at Eltham's Landing his effort to get between Johnston and Richmond was vigorously foiled. The result was, that, instead of "pushing the enemy to the wall," he was content to allow General Johnston to retire at his leisure, making no further effort to interfere with him.*

The retreat up the Peninsula was conducted with great skill, under many discouraging circumstances. The roads were in a horrible state, so bad, indeed, that it was almost impossible to force the wagons and artillery over them. The troops marched through mud almost to their knees, and were compelled to subsist on parched corn for the last few days of the movement. By the 10th the Chickahominy was reached.

General Johnston withdrew his forces to the south bank of the stream, leaving only a small detachment at Mechanicsville, on the north side, four miles from Richmond. Another detachment was stationed at Hanover Court House.

The evacuation of the Peninsula was followed by the abandonment of Norfolk, which took place on the ninth of May. On the next day the Federal forces from Fortress Monroe,

* General McClellan states that Franklin repulsed all of Whiting's attacks, and that the latter retired from the field at 3 o'clock, P. M. The reader will remember that Franklin's movement was an aggressive one, and of the first importance to McClellan. Thus we have a confession that he was forced to assume the defensive and prevented from accomplishing his object.

under Major General Wool, occupied it. General Huger's command was, towards the close of the month, united with General Johnston's main column.

VIII.

DARK DAYS.

The loss of Norfolk left the iron-clad steamer *Virginia* in a helpless condition. She was too large to be carried up the James River within supporting distance of the Confederate forces, and her commander, Commodore Tatnall, believing it impossible to save the vessel, abandoned and blew her up.

Thus the James River was left unguarded to a point within a few miles of Richmond. Appreciating the necessity of prompt movements, Commander Rogers, of the Federal navy, ascended the stream with the *Galena*, the *Monitor*, the *Aroostook*, the *Port Royal*, and the *Naugatuck*, the first two being iron-clads, for the purpose of ascertaining the positions of the Confederates along the river, and inflicting such damage upon them as lay in the power of the fleet.

Nine miles below Richmond, on the south side of the James, is a bold bluff, afterwards famous as Drewry's Bluff. In May 1862 it was crowned with an unfinished earthwork, mounting four guns. Below this work the river was partially obstructed by a row of sunken schooners, and spiles driven into the bed of the stream. The post was in this condition when the advance of the Federal fleet became known in Richmond. Instantly every exertion was made to put the works at Drewry's Bluff in a better condition for defence, and to render the closing of the river more effectual, both of which objects were accomplished, though but imperfectly.

The news of the approach of the Federal gunboats produced the greatest consternation at Richmond. The Confederate Congress adjourned and departed in the midst of the excitement. The Government rapidly prepared to abandon the city, and did little or nothing to encourage the people. The most distressing and exaggerated rumors were freely circulated, and the place was gloomy enough. The halls of the "War Department" were piled up with large boxes marked "War Dept., Columbia, S. C.," and through its open windows, the Adjutant-General's office could be seen stripped of its usual contents. Similar sights were to be witnessed at all the public offices. The citizens hurried away by every conveyance, and to a mere observer it seemed that there was no hope of saving the Capital.

In the midst of all this dismay the Legislature of Virginia remained in session, unterrified by the bugbear that had driven the Congress away. On the 14th of May the following resolutions were adopted by both Houses of the Legislature:—

"Resolved, By the General Assembly of Virginia, that the General Assembly hereby express its desire that the Capital of the State be defended to the last extremity, if such defence is in accordance with the views of the President of the Confederate States, and that the President be assured that whatever destruction and loss of property of the State or individuals shall thereby result, will be cheerfully submitted to.

"Resolved, That a Committee of two on the part of the Senate and three on the part of the House, be appointed to communicate the adoption of the foregoing resolution to the President."

The resolutions were immediately communicated to President Davis, who assured the Committee of his intention to hold the city, though there can be no doubt that he had formed this resolution at the last moment. A meeting of the citizens was

held, which endorsed the course of the Legislature. Confidence was restored, and the issue of the contest awaited with calmness, though not without anxiety.

On the morning of the 15th of May, the gunboats opened fire on the batteries at Drewry's Bluff, which they had discovered the evening before. The Galena was in the advance. When the vessels had approached within four hundred yards of the obstructions, the batteries opened upon them. They did not reply until the Galena had placed herself directly athwart the channel, when they returned a brisk fire. The engagement continued with spirit until five minutes past eleven, when the steamers withdrew out of range, and dropped down the stream. The Confederate sharpshooters along the shore did good service, by picking off every man who exposed himself to them.

The fire of the Southern guns was directed principally at the Galena, the flag-ship. She was badly cut up, being struck repeatedly. Commander Rogers, in his dispatch of May 16th, reports a loss of thirteen killed and eleven wounded. A large one hundred-pound Parrott gun, on the Naugatuck, burst during the action, disabling the vessel.

Lieutenant D. C. Constable, commanding the gunboat Stevens, speaks as follows of this engagement, in a letter addressed to his mother : —

“ The iron-clad Galena was hit forty-six times, twenty-eight shot and shell having completely penetrated her armor, killing fourteen and wounding about twenty of her crew. * * * * Strange to say, four out of five of the commanders of the vessels engaged were more or less injured.”

The Southern loss was seven killed and eight wounded. General Lee and President Davis were present during the action.

The result of the encounter with the gunboats was encourag-

ing. Previous to this they had been believed to be invincible. Their repulse on this occasion did much towards destroying this feeling, and inspiring the country with confidence.

The few days immediately following the arrival of the Southern army within the lines of Richmond were intensely dark. The Government was more than half inclined to abandon the city, and there were even rumors that the army was to be withdrawn behind the James. The people were disheartened, and were leaving the city daily. The army was very weak, and still suffering from the effects of its severe service on the Peninsula and the retreat. The Federal forces were within a few miles of the Capital, and it was possible that they might overwhelm General Johnston's command, now only forty-seven thousand strong. These fears were not relieved by the occurrences which immediately followed McClellan's arrival on the Chickahominy.

On the 20th of May the advance of the Federal army reached the Chickahominy River, at Bottom's Bridge. This, as well as the railroad bridge, had been destroyed by the Confederates. The left wing, consisting of Casey's division and Heintzelman's corps, was at once thrown across the stream, and ordered to intrench itself on the high ground beyond the swamp, and the bridge was rebuilt. At the same time, the right and centre were advanced to the river. On the 24th of May the Confederates were driven out of Mechanicsville, and forced across the swamp. The Federal right wing was then established there, the centre resting on the river at New Bridge, near the York River Railroad crossing.

Having thus secured his position on the Chickahominy, McClellan proceeded to extend his right towards the Upper Pamunkey, for the purpose of uniting with McDowell's corps, which, as we shall see farther on, had been promised him. Hanover Court House was the point at which he desired to

effect this junction. It was but two marches from Fredericksburg from which McDowell was to begin his advance, and but one march from the Federal position on the Chickahominy. It was held by a brigade of Southern troops, too weak to make a successful stand against a decided attack. On the 27th of May, Porter's corps attacked the Confederates, and, after a sharp fight, drove them back towards Richmond.

The Federal line now extended across the Virginia Central Railroad, which was partially destroyed, and after the fight at Hanover Court House, the Fredericksburg road was also cut.

IX.

SEVEN PINES.

Meanwhile the work of bridging the Chickahominy was carried on with energy by the Federals. Heavy rain-storms, however, swelled the stream to such an extent that some of the bridges were swept away, while others were rendered insecure.

General McClellan now determined to advance his left wing nearer to Richmond. Accordingly, on the 25th of May, General Keyes, who had been placed in command of the left, was ordered to "advance on the Williamsburg road, and take up and fortify the nearest strong position to a fork of roads called the Seven Pines." The order was obeyed promptly, and General Keyes occupied the country between the Seven Pines and Fair Oaks Station on the York River Railroad, in force, extending his pickets to the Chickahominy.

This was the Federal position on the 31st of May. Before the 30th of May, General Johnston was informed of the presence of Keyes' column on the south side of the swamp, and on that day General D. H. Hill reported the enemy in strong

force immediately in his front. General Johnston at once determined to attack them the next morning, hoping to defeat Keyes before he could receive reënforcements. Generals D. H. Hill, Huger, and G. W. Smith were ordered to bring their forces into position at once, and General Longstreet, being near headquarters, received verbal instructions, and was assigned the direction of operations on the right.

General Hill, supported by Longstreet's division, was to advance by the Williamsburg road, and attack the enemy in front. General Huger, with his division, was to move by the Charles City road, and fall upon the flank of any troops which might be engaged with Longstreet and Hill, unless he found in his front a force sufficient to prevent him from doing so. General Smith was to march to the junction of the Nine Mile and the New Bridge Roads, to be in readiness either to fall on Keyes' right flank, or to cover Longstreet's left. These columns were to move at daybreak, and it was expected to begin the action about eight o'clock on the morning of the 31st of May.

The Chickahominy river, which separated the two wings of the Federal army, is ordinarily a narrow stream, which may be easily bridged, and at the last of May two bridges were in use, by which communication was maintained between the Federal force north of the Chickahominy, and that south of the stream.

During the night of the 30th, a heavy rain storm swelled the river to such proportions that it was believed that General McClellan would not be able to send any troops across to the assistance of General Keyes. The rains also rendered the soft, boggy soil almost unfit for military operations, thus adding greatly to the personal discomfort of both armies, during the night, and to the difficulty of manœuvring the next day.

Generals Longstreet, Hill, and Smith were in position on the morning of May 31st, in time to commence operations by eight o'clock. General Huger passed through Richmond on

Friday afternoon, and was expected to reach his position in time to coöperate with the other columns. Hour after hour passed away, however, but he did not make his appearance. Unwilling to make a partial attack instead of the combined movement that had been agreed upon, General Longstreet waited impatiently for General Huger, though conscious that he was losing time, which was of the first importance. He waited for him until two o'clock in the afternoon; then, finding it useless to delay longer, threw forward his column and opened the battle with his artillery and skirmishers.

The first hostile force encountered by General Longstreet, was the division of Major-General Casey, which was strongly entrenched on the Seven Pines' farm on the Williamsburg road. D. H. Hill's division was in the advance, and drove the enemy rapidly before it.

Brigadier-General I. B. Richardson, commanding a Federal division engaged, thus speaks of this first attack: —

“The enemy commenced a furious assault upon the most salient point of our whole line, namely, the redoubt and intrenched camp of Casey's division. It was, perhaps, the most perfect surprise which ever happened on the continent, and the column moving forward without warning, brushed away the division of Casey like chaff, without waiting even to throw out skirmishers in front and on the flanks of the column. I don't care to know anything of this most disgraceful route. Suffice it to say that they not only ran then, but have not since been heard from; but have abandoned their whole camp, wagons, teams, and seven pieces of artillery.”*

Longstreet now had possession of Casey's camp and first line of defence. Without pausing, he pushed on steadily. The enemy, after their first surprise, brought up fresh troops, and

* This extract is from a letter written by General Richardson on the 4th of June, 1862. See Rebellion Record, Vol. 5., p. 87.

not only endeavored to prevent the advance of the Southerners, but attempted, with energy, to retake the position they had lost. "At each new position," says General Johnston, "the Confederates encountered fresh troops belonging to it, and reinforcements brought on from the rear. * * But their advance was never successfully resisted."

The battle was hotly contested, the Federals disputing the ground inch by inch. A member of a New York battery thus describes the nature of the fighting :—

"Our shot tore their ranks wide open, and shattered them asunder in a manner that was frightful to witness; but they closed up at once, and came on as steadily as English veterans. When they got within four hundred yards, we closed our case shot and opened on them with canister, and such destruction I never elsewhere witnessed. At each discharge great gaps were made in their ranks; indeed whole companies went down before that murderous fire; but they closed up with an order and discipline that was awe-inspiring. * * * It was awful to see their ranks, torn and shattered by every discharge of canister that we poured right into their faces; and while their dead and dying lay in piles, closed up, and still kept advancing right in the face of the fire. At one time three lines, one behind the other, were steadily advancing, and three of their flags were brought in range of one of our guns shotted with canister. 'Fire!' shouted the gunner, and down went those three flags, and a gap was opened through those three lines as if a thunderbolt had torn through them, and their dead lay in swaths. But they at once closed up and came steadily on, never halting or wavering, right through the woods, over the fence, through the fields, right up to our guns, and sweeping everything before them, captured every piece. * * * Our whole division was cut to pieces, with what loss I do not know."

Night alone checked the victorious advance of Longstreet and

Hill. By nightfall they had driven the enemy back to the "Seven Pines," a distance of more than two miles, "through their own camps, and from a series of intrenchments, and repelled every attempt to recapture them with great slaughter."* The troops slept in the captured encampments, and made their supper on the provisions taken from the enemy, who remained, during the night within musket range.

In the meantime, General Johnston, who had stationed himself with General Smith's division, had waited impatiently for the sound of Longstreet's cannon on the right. Owing to some peculiar condition of the atmosphere, he did not hear the firing, and at last sent an aid to learn the condition of affairs in that direction. At four o'clock the officer returned, and reported that Longstreet and Hill were pressing on with vigor. General Smith was at once ordered forward.

Whiting's three brigades were in the advance, while Hood's brigade, by order of General Johnston, moved towards the right to coöperate with Longstreet. Smith made a spirited attack on the Federal position in his front, and succeeding in forcing their line back to Fair Oaks Station on the York River Railroad. Here he encountered a new obstacle.

As soon as the news of the attack on Casey's division reached him, General Sumner put his corps in readiness to cross the Chickahominy to the assistance of General Keyes. Appreciating the value of promptness, he, with an energy which was characteristic of him, set his column in motion, and only halted when his command reached the bridges. By this movement he saved an hour or two, and was able to cross his corps, upon the receipt of General McClellan's order, in time to resist the attack of General Smith upon Fair Oaks Station.

Finding the resistance at this point more formidable than he had expected, General Johnston hurried to General Smith all

* General Johnston's Report.

the reënforcements at hand, consisting of two brigades. The attack was made with great vigor, and met with a stubborn resolution. When the firing ceased shortly after dark, the Federals still held their position on the railroad. Their left wing had been defeated with great slaughter, but their right was still unbroken.

Towards sunset General Johnston was severely wounded, and the command of the army passed to Major-General G. W. Smith.

Smith's troops bivouacked for the night within musket shot of the Federal lines. General McClellan hurried fresh regiments over the river, so that by daybreak the next morning his army south of the stream was strong enough to be no longer exposed to the danger which had threatened it.

Sunday morning, June 1st, found the two armies still in front of each other. At daylight General Smith saw that the enemy's position in his immediate front was defended by formidable earth-works which he had not noticed on the previous evening. He deemed it best, in consideration of this fact, not to renew the attack, but to hold his ground, and await the movements of the enemy.

The Federal forces which General Longstreet had driven back were also reënforced during the night of the 31st. Longstreet was reënforced late on Saturday evening by General Huger's division. At early dawn on the morning of June 1st the enemy made a heavy attack upon a portion of Longstreet's line held by General Pickett's brigade, which was supported by Pryor's brigade. These commands gallantly held their ground until half-past ten o'clock, when the firing ceased. During the remainder of the day the enemy shelled the Confederate position, their batteries north of the river keeping up a steady fire upon the Southern left at Garnett's and Mrs. Price's farms.

The Confederates passed the day in securing and bearing off

the captured artillery, small arms, and other property, and at sunset quietly resumed the positions they had occupied previous to the battle.

The Confederates lost four thousand two hundred and thirty-six men, killed, wounded and missing. They captured ten pieces of artillery, six thousand muskets, one garrison flag, four regimental colors, and a quantity of tents and camp equipage. General McClellan reported his total loss in killed, wounded, and missing, at five thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine.

The battle of Seven Pines is claimed as a victory by both sides. A careful review of the struggle, must, we think, convince the unprejudiced reader that the advantage remained with the Confederates. Had General Johnston's plan been carried out as he had reason to expect, it would have resulted in the total destruction or capture of Keyes' command before aid could have been received by that general. But the unpardonable delay of General Huger, who could have crossed Stony Run, in spite of its overflow, had he been possessed of a little more energy, was the greatest disadvantage under which the Southern commander labored. Still, though the attack was made nearly seven hours later than was expected, it resulted in the complete defeat of the Federal left wing, and Smith's attack on Fair Oaks was so spirited as to induce the Federal commander at that point to remain quiet during Sunday, when, having been reënforced, he might have inflicted considerable damage upon the Confederates. Besides this, General Johnston struck the blow with the intention of checking McClellan's advance on the south side of the swamp. Although he failed to destroy Keyes' corps, he crippled McClellan so greatly, and impressed him so deeply with a sense of his power and determination, that the plans of "the Young Napoleon" were brought to a complete "stand-still," for that officer at once abandoned his idea of

capturing Richmond by a *coup de main*, and commenced to lay siege to the Southern position in front of the city. In view of all this, it must be admitted that, although the firmness of the Federal right to a great degree counterbalanced their defeat on the left, and rendered the engagement in a tactical sense a drawn battle, the real advantages lay with the Confederates.

It is not true, as has been claimed by many Federal officers and writers, that had General McClellan advanced his whole force on Sunday morning he would have followed a retreating enemy into Richmond. So far from retreating, all the troops in the defences of the city were advanced to the Chickahominy early on Sunday morning.

There was, however, an advantage which he might have obtained had he been bold enough to attempt it. Had he moved a column of twenty-five thousand men upon Garnett's and Mrs. Price's farms at daylight on Sunday morning, he could have captured them, as they were held by a mere handful of men without intrenchments. The heights upon which these farms are situated command the New Bridge, which was made passable for troops and artillery by a little after eight o'clock in the morning. This bridge would have enabled him to reënforce his left wing to any extent with great rapidity, and would have brought him directly upon the Southern left flank and rear, thus compelling the Confederates to fall back nearer to Richmond. Then by throwing forward his whole army with vigor, he might either have entered Richmond with the Southerners, or have secured a position from which his guns could have commanded the city. It was a tempting opportunity, and the fall of General Johnston had somewhat confused affairs in the Confederate army. The *old* Napoleon would have clutched the occasion and profited by it. "The *Young* Napoleon" hesitated, and lost everything. In the succeeding pages the reader will

see how he was forced to change his offensive campaign into an unsuccessful defensive.*

* General Johnston furnished the following note to the authors of "Harper's Pictorial History of the Great Rebellion."

"JANUARY, 3, 1863.

"In September 1861 the effective strength of the army under my command in Northern Virginia was about thirty-seven thousand. It occupied Centreville, Manassas, and the Lower Occoquan.

"On the 31st of December it had been increased, by improved health and the addition of Loring's and Holmes' troops, to fifty-four thousand, including Jackson's command. Jackson's eight thousand were near Romney and Winchester. There were twenty-six hundred at Leesburg, thirty-one thousand, eight hundred at Centreville and Manassas; seven thousand on the Lower Occoquan and near Dumfries; and five thousand about Fredericksburg. This army was much reduced during the winter by the effect of what we called the 'Bounty and Furlough Law,' but received some recruits from the South in the early spring. When, in April, it moved to Williamsburg, its strength (effective) was about fifty thousand; of which six thousand were left with Jackson in the Valley, and six thousand with Ewell on the Rappahannock.

"The remaining thirty-eight thousand were sent to the Peninsula in two bodies. I accompanied the second, which arrived on the 17th of April. Magruder's own force was about fifteen thousand, making our army at Yorktown nearly fifty-three thousand, exclusive of cavalry.* Sickness and the fight at Williamsburg reduced this number by six thousand. Our loss at Williamsburg was about eighteen hundred.

"According to the above numbers, the strength of this army when it reached the neighborhood of Richmond was about forty-seven thousand. To this were added, near the end of May, Anderson's and Branch's troops, about thirteen thousand, and three brigades of Huger's division, not quite seven thousand. If the effect of sickness is not considered, this would make the army amount to sixty-seven thousand at the time of the fights at Fair Oaks and Seven Pines. On that occasion four brigades of G. W. Smith's division were engaged at Fair Oaks; and at Seven Pines, D. H. Hill's four, and two of Longstreet's were engaged on the 31st of May. On the morning of June 1st, there were nine Confederate brigades at Fair Oaks, five of which were fresh, and thirteen at Seven Pines, seven of which were fresh, that is to say, which had not been engaged the day before."

*General Johnston no doubt bases his estimate of Magruder's force upon returns made early in March. As I have previously stated, three thousand five hundred men were taken from Magruder and sent to General Randolph

X.

A CHANGE OF COMMANDERS.

As I have stated, the command of the army passed to Major-General G. W. Smith when General Johnston was wounded. General Smith's rank, however, did not entitle him to so large a command, and, in view of the critical condition of affairs, President Davis resolved to place General Lee at the head of the Army of Northern Virginia, and accordingly, though he retained his position as Commanding General, he was ordered to enter upon his new duties at once, which he did on the 3d of June 1862.

His first care was to put the army in a condition for an effective campaign. While on duty at Richmond, he had exerted himself to bring to General Johnston's aid all the troops at his disposal. He continued these exertions in his new command, and the conscription having now begun to yield its fruits, he was able to bring the strength of the Army of Northern Virginia, by the 20th of June, to over seventy thousand men.

During 1862, the city of Richmond had for its military commander, Brigadier-General John H. Winder, a man notoriously unfit for his position, and whose outrages upon the citizens soon made him odious to the community. General Winder organized a Provost Marshal's department in the city, and supplied it with a strong detective police force. This nar-

at Suffolk, only a few weeks before McClellan advanced upon Yorktown. This left Magruder the force (eleven thousand five hundred) which he mentions in his report, and placed the strength of the Confederate army on the Peninsula under General Johnston, at forty-nine thousand five hundred, exclusive of cavalry, and of the reënforcements from Norfolk.

rative has to deal with only one part of their operations. I am glad to be spared the revolting task of relating *all* their deeds. A passport system was established in the city, under the supervision of the Provost Marshal and his police. It was designed that this system should prevent the departure of improper persons from Richmond, but, owing to the shameful corruption of those in charge of it, it proved a failure. Passports could always be bought, and the spies and secret agents of the enemy were at all times thus enabled to pass at will between Richmond and the Federal lines. So thoroughly was this the case that about the middle of May, General Johnston informed the President that the enemy seemed to know not only what was going on in his lines, but absolutely what he intended doing in the future, as if the most secret counsels of the Cabinet were divulged. With the hope of checking the evil, General Lee called the attention of the Provost Marshal to the dangerous results of the too free issue of passports. This, however, had no effect, and, after assuming the command of the army, General Lee ordered that no one with Winder's permits should be allowed to pass the pickets of his forces. All permits for such a purpose were to be issued at his headquarters. This checked the evil as far as the army was concerned, but the Government was never free from it.

The appointment of General Lee to his new position was by no means a popular measure. The failure of the Western Virginia campaign had placed him under a cloud with the people, and the troops, who were devotedly attached to General Johnston, were not willing that they should be permanently deprived of their old commander. All classes were ignorant of the character of the man in whose hands the fate of the Confederacy was placed. That it was a wise choice on the part of the Government, the reader will soon perceive. Looking back now, however, it is hard to realize that any one should ever

have objected to General Lee. It was not long before the feeling of sufferance with which the army received him, gave place to the most unbounded admiration for him. After the month of June, the troops would have mutinied, had he been taken from them.*

It was General Johnston's intention not to allow McClellan to lay siege to Richmond. When he fell back from Yorktown, he determined to attack the Federal army at the earliest favorable opportunity. In pursuance of this resolution, he struck at Keyes' column at Seven Pines, and had he not been disabled, there would have pursued a course similar to that adopted by his successor. General Lee was also fully impressed with the danger of allowing McClellan to approach the city at his leisure, under the cover of the strong works by which he was protecting his advance. Therefore, the first days succeeding General Lee's presence on the Chickahominy were spent in examining the position of the two armies, and arranging a definite plan of campaign.

Meanwhile, General McClellan was steadily preparing for the grand movement which was to place the "stars and stripes" above the Southern Capital. When he found that McDowell would not be sent to him at Yorktown, he waited until he had secured his position on the Chickahominy, and then renewed his appeals for fresh troops. Finally his Government consented to grant his request; but, in order to cover Washington at the same time, decided that McDowell should march overland from Fredericksburg, which he then held, and unite his left wing with McClellan's right, at some point on the Upper Pamunkey. On the 18th of May, General McClellan was informed that McDowell would march at once, with between thirty-five and forty thousand men. Immediately the right wing of the Army

* These views are derived from my conversations with the troops at the time.

of the Potomac was extended up the Pamunkey to Hanover Court House, which, as I have stated, was captured on the 27th of May. By dispersing the Southern force at this point, McClellan opened the way for a successful junction between McDowell and himself. The danger which now threatened Richmond was great indeed. The Federal force on the Chickahominy was over one hundred and twenty thousand strong, and the arrival of a fresh column of forty thousand men on the north of the city, would have rendered McClellan's chances of success almost certain. The Federal commander, appreciating this, waited impatiently for the sound of McDowell's cannon. The advance guard of this column had already begun the march, and in all probability the junction would be effected by the 20th of May.

The movement was never completed. All this while General Jackson, who, as the reader will remember, had been left in the Valley of Virginia, when General Johnston retired behind the Rapidan, had been moving upon Banks' army. The part assigned to Jackson was one which required the exercise of the greatest skill and determination. He was to neutralize the forces of Fremont, Banks, and McDowell, and prevent them from rendering any assistance to McClellan. This task was faithfully performed. Jackson's army fell back from Winchester on the 11th of March, and retired as far as Mount Jackson, and then rapidly retracing its steps, fought the battle of Kernstown. Although repulsed in this engagement, General Jackson succeeded in retaining in the Valley, Banks' Corps, which had been designed for the occupation of Manassas. This led the Federal Government to decide upon retaining McDowell at Manassas, in order to protect Washington against any sudden dash of the Confederates. Thus McClellan was deprived of the assistance of the 1st Corps of his army on the Peninsula. After Jackson's withdrawal up the Valley, a season of com-

parative quietude ensued in that region, and it was even believed that his troops had been sent to Richmond. This supposition, and the belief that Fremont, who was slowly advancing towards Staunton, would be able to manage any Southern force left in the Valley, induced the Federal authorities to allow McDowell to move from Manassas to the assistance of McClellan. They were, after all, not very secure in their own minds, and showed their sense of this by requiring General McDowell to conduct his movement so as not to "uncover Washington" at any time before or after his junction with McClellan — a ridiculous order, which was utterly inconsistent with the movement. All this while, however, they continued to watch the Valley with anxiety, and with reason as the sequel proved.

General Jackson had not abandoned the Valley. On the contrary he had been reënforced by Ewell's division, and was resting in the neighborhood of Swift Run Gap. On the 7th of May he crossed the mountains, and on the 8th fell upon Fremont's advance at the village of McDowell, and drove it back into Western Virginia. Then, bearing eastward, he suddenly returned to the Valley, attacked Banks, routed and drove him across the Potomac, dealing his first blow at Front Royal on the 23rd of May, the very day previous to the time McDowell had promised McClellan to begin his march from the Rappahannock.

The Federal authorities, finding their fears concerning Jackson thus realized, became seriously alarmed. They believed the great flanker's object to be nothing less than the capture of Washington City, and it was resolved to abandon McDowell's movement upon Richmond in order to secure the safety of the Capital. On the 24th of May, President Lincoln wrote as follows to General McDowell:

"General Fremont has been ordered by telegraph to move from Franklin on Harrisonburgh, to relieve General Banks,

and capture or destroy Jackson's or Ewell's forces. You are instructed, laying aside for the present the movement on Richmond, to put twenty thousand men in motion at once for the Shenandoah, moving on the line or in advance of the Manassas Gap Railroad."

On the same day General McDowell wrote to the Secretary of War :

"The President's order has been received,—is in process of execution. *This is a crushing blow to us.*"

So successful had been the movements of Jackson that McClellan was thunderstruck when informed, on the same day on which the above letters were written, that his plan had failed, and that McDowell would not join him. There now remained for him nothing but to push forward with his own army.

The position of the Federal army was as follows: The left was established south of the Chickahominy, between White Oak Swamp and New Bridge, and was defended by a series of powerful works, the approaches to which were obstructed by felling the heavy woods in front, and commanded by numerous batteries. The centre was on the river near the New Bridge, while the right extended to Meadow Bridge, beyond Mechanicsville, (the force at Hanover Court House having been called in) and was strongly intrenched in a country admirably adapted to defensive operations. This line was fifteen miles in length, and almost a crescent in form. By means of the York River Railroad, which ran directly from the White House, on the Pamunkey River, to the centre of their camp, easy communication could be maintained with all parts of the North, the Pamunkey being navigable for the largest steamers. Thus the Federal army was supplied with everything necessary to its success, with but little labor.

The Chickahominy intersected the position at right angles. It is a "narrow, sluggish stream, which, rising northwest of

Richmond, runs in a southeastern direction, and, holding its course down the Peninsula, heads to the south and empties into James River, some distance above Williamsburg. Its banks are swampy and overgrown with forest trees and heavy under-wood, rendering the ground almost impassable. Through these tangled swamps, narrow and winding roads of oozy turf, or dark and miry clay, afford a difficult and uncertain means of transit from point to point. These mysterious depths are still tenanted by the fallow deer, and from the shadowy recesses, dim with trailing vines, comes the sorrowful and plaintive cry of the whip-poor-will. * * * Taking Richmond as a central point, the course of the Chickahominy described something like the arc of a circle around it to the north and east. At Meadow Bridge, where the outposts of the enemy's right wing were established, the stream is but six miles distant from the Capital; at New Bridge, on the Nine Mile road, which led to General McClellan's centre, the distance is nine miles. The avenues of approach from the Chickahominy, the arc, to Richmond, the centre, of the circle, were—commencing on the North, and travelling down the stream—the Fredericksburg Railroad, the Brook turnpike, the Meadow Bridge road, the Central Railroad, crossing at Meadow Bridge, the Mechanicsville turnpike, the Nine Mile or New Bridge road, the York River Railroad, the Williamsburg road, the Charles City road, and the Darbytown road.”*

The Confederate army was in front of Richmond, extending from the neighborhood of James River on the right, near Chaffin's Bluff, to the Chickahominy beyond the Meadow Bridge, on the left. Huger's division held the right, Magruder was in the centre, and A. P. Hill held the left. Longstreet and D. H. Hill supported the right and centre. The army was in excellent condition, and numbered ninety thousand men, includ-

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson.

ing the cavalry and Jackson's command. The Federal army, at this time, was one hundred and fifteen thousand one hundred and two, strong.

General Lee was not slow in forming his plan of operations, but in order to learn more accurately the position and probable strength of his opponent, ordered General Stuart to make a reconnaissance of the Federal lines.

XI.

THE RIDE AROUND McCLELLAN.

In compliance with General Lee's order, General Stuart collected a force of one thousand two hundred cavalry, consisting of the 1st, 4th, and 9th Virginia regiments, under Colonel Fitz Lee, and Colonel W. H. Fitzhugh Lee, two squadrons of the Jeff Davis Legion, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel W. T. Martin, and two guns from the Stuart horse artillery, under Lieutenant Breathed. These troops left Richmond on the 12th of June, and rendezvoused at Kilby's Station on the Fredericksburg Railroad. Several miles from the city a number of negroes were encountered, making their way to the Federal lines. These were promptly arrested and sent back to Richmond, and the column, keeping close to the railroad, pushed on northward, and encamped for the night near Hanover Court House, and not far from the South Anna bridge. General Stuart had purposely directed his first day's march toward Louisa county, in order that if the enemy heard of it, they might think he was marching to reënforce Jackson. This brought him twenty-two miles from Richmond, and placed him in a position from which he could move directly upon the Federal rear. During the night signal rockets were thrown up to apprise the army of his

progress, and were answered from Richmond. Scouts were kept out on all sides, and every precaution taken to guard against a surprise.

By daylight on Friday morning, the 13th of June, the camp was astir, and silently and rapidly the men dispatched their hasty meal, and were in the saddle. The march was resumed, the men still being in profound ignorance of their destination. General Stuart, now that he was fairly within the enemy's lines, informed his officers of the objects of the expedition, that they might the more intelligently coöperate with him in the execution of his orders. The scouts came in as the march began, and reported the road clear to the Old Church. This point is almost equidistant from the New Bridge and Pamunkey River, on the road leading direct to McClellan's centre, and upon it the column now moved rapidly.

Arriving at Hanover Court House the place was found to be in possession of one hundred and fifty men of the 5th Regular cavalry. General Stuart at once ordered Colonel Fitz Lee to take a squadron and gain their rear, but the enemy, taking alarm, retired towards Mechanicsville before Colonel Lee could come up with them. Their commander gallantly endeavored to induce them to make a stand, and sealed his devotion to his cause with his life, while his men fled at a hard gallop. No attempt was made to pursue them, as Stuart's route was by a different road.

From the Court House the cavalry pushed on by Taliaferro's Mill, Eden Church, and Hawes' shop. At the last named place the pickets were surprised, and several videttes captured. A company of cavalry was discovered drawn up across the road, evidently awaiting an attack. Lieut. Rodins dashed at it with a squadron of the 9th Virginia regiment, and put it to flight, inflicting a loss of several men upon it.

Beyond Hawes' shop a regiment of cavalry was seen. This

was the 5th, (formerly the 2nd) General Lee's old regiment. It did not attempt any resistance, but fell back rapidly, closely followed by Stuart's men. The chase continued for a mile or two, the enemy keeping well in advance, until Tottapotamoi Creek was crossed, and the vicinity of Old Church reached. Here the enemy, having been reënforced, halted and prepared to dispute the further progress of the Confederates.

There was but one method of attacking them — in column of fours along the road — and General Stuart at once threw forward his men. He preferred to make the attack with one squadron at a time, as this would always leave him the means of throwing in fresh troops at the critical moment.

A squadron under Captain Latané charged the enemy's column with spirit. A sharp hand-to-hand fight ensued, resulting in the Federals being put to flight, with a loss of several killed and wounded. Several officers and privates were taken prisoners, and a number of horses, arms, equipments, and five guidons captured. Captain Latané singled out the Federal commander, and dashing at him cut off his hat close to his face with a blow of his sabre. The latter dodged the blow, which had else been fatal, and turning quickly fired two revolver loads at Latané, killing him instantly. A few minutes later and the Federal officer was cut down by the sabre of a Southern private.

The 1st Virginia cavalry, under Colonel Fitz Lee, followed fast in the rear of the flying troopers and captured their camp, driving out five companies of cavalry, and securing several officers and privates, a number of horses and arms, and a quantity of stores. The horses and prisoners were brought off, but the tents, stores, and wagons were burned.

General Stuart had now to decide whether to return by the way he had come, or to cross the Chickahominy at a point lower down. If he chose the former, which was the route the

enemy would be most likely to expect him to take, he would have to incur the risk of being cut off by a superior force, and hemmed in between the South Anna and the Pamunkey. On the other hand his guides informed him that the Chickahominy was fordable at the Forge Bridge. Should he select the latter route, he would pass entirely around the Federal army, though his original instructions did not contemplate such a movement on his part. He believed that if he could pass the York River Railroad in safety, he would be able to reach the Chickahominy without molestation. At all events, he could distance any infantry brought against him, and he believed his command capable of taking care of the cavalry. Thus the latter route promised to put him in possession of more complete information concerning the Federal position and strength, besides being, in spite of its risk, the safer of the two, all things considered. In view of this, General Stuart decided to adopt it, and the head of the column was turned toward Tunstall's Station, in New Kent County. In order to deceive the enemy, if possible, Stuart took care to inquire of the inhabitants concerning the road to Hanover Court House.

The men knew not whither they were moving, save that they were going right in among the enemy, but their confidence in their leader was unshaken, and they followed with alacrity. The danger of pursuit rendered the rear an object of as much concern as the front, and one of the guns was sent to Lieutenant-Colonel Martin for his greater security. No attack was made upon it, however. On the contrary a party of the enemy, twenty-five in number, came up to it with a flag of truce, and actually surrendered, thinking that Stuart but heralded the approach of Lee's whole army.

Once in the Federal lines, the route of the column was marked by burning camps and wagons. The inhabitants gazed in silent wonder at the welcome sight of the gray jackets.

Old men and women would rush out from the houses along the route, and greet them with a tearful "God bless you, boys!" "Our cavalry here!" they would exclaim. "What can it mean?" But no time was to be had for explanations, and the troops pushed on, followed by the warning cries of "Take care, men! Take care! Heaven bless you; but take care, the enemy are everywhere." O

Just on the borders of New Kent, the squadron in the advance came upon an extensive sutler's establishment, provided with all the luxuries as well as the necessities of camp life. Here the hungry troopers halted, and called for such things as they wanted. The proprietor furnished them with alacrity, but upon demanding his pay, was told to his dismay that he and several Federal soldiers lounging around, were prisoners of war. The remainder of the column emptied the establishment of its contents, and then pressing on, halted at Garlick's where a couple of transports, lying in the Pamunkey, were destroyed. Then the column turned towards the railroad.

A few picked men were sent in advance to secure the depot at Tunstall's and cut the telegraph wires. Hurrying forward, they surprised and captured, without firing a gun, the guard of fifteen or twenty men at the depot, and proceeded to obstruct the track.

While this was going on the column came in sight of a long wagon train, guarded by five companies of cavalry. The guard fled at the sight of the Stuart's horsemen, and the train fell an easy prey into the hands of the latter.

The party at the depot at Tunstall's was reënforced, and just as this was done a train of cars came thundering down from the army, *en route* for the White House. The men were hastily thrown out along the road, but, as the speed of the train was so great, it flew by, knocking the obstructions from the track. The troops at once opened fire on it, and as some of the cars

were "flats," and loaded with Federal soldiers, a number were killed and wounded. Many leaped from the train in terror. Some were captured, but others escaped to the woods.

It was now dark, and time was of the utmost importance. Still it was necessary to halt for awhile. The railroad bridge over Black Creek was fired, the horses and mules were taken from the train, and the wagons burned. Then, with the red glare of the burning train illumining the heavens, the march was resumed. The roads were in a horrible condition, and it was with great difficulty that the artillery could be dragged through the mud. This also caused the troops to straggle slightly, so that upon reaching Tallevsille, General Stuart found it necessary to halt three and a half hours for the column to close up. Here he captured a large hospital with one hundred and fifty patients, but declined to molest it, thus allowing the surgeon in charge and the attendants to continue their humane work undisturbed.

At twelve o'clock the men set off again, and marching all night reached Forge Bridge, on the Chickahominy, eight miles beyond, just at daylight on the morning of the 14th. Here General Stuart expected to be able to ford the stream. As soon as it was reached, Colonel Fitzhugh Lee tried the ford, but, to his disappointment, found the river very deep, and the current very strong.

The situation of the gallant troopers was now extremely perilous. They were within hearing of the Federal pickets, and strong bodies of Federal cavalry were scouring the country, endeavoring to cut them off, their audacious exploits having roused all the energies of the Federal commander. The river in their front was impassable, and it seemed that they were doomed to capture at last. Man after man plunged into the stream at different points, hoping to find a ford, but in vain. The river must be bridged, or the command must fall into the hands of the enemy. Yet even this seemed a vain task.

Quietly making his arrangements to guard against a surprise, General Stuart set the men to work to felling trees, and while engaged in this work, he was informed that the debris of the original bridge was still complete enough to require but little mending. Quickly moving his command to the spot, the old bridge was repaired, the materials being taken from an adjacent warehouse. By one o'clock in the afternoon the stream was passed in safety. Another branch of the Chickahominy was forded with difficulty, and the troops entered the Southern lines. The reconnoissance was ended.

Besides gaining definite and reliable information concerning the position and strength of the Federal army, General Stuart captured one hundred and sixty-five prisoners, two hundred and sixty mules and horses, with more or less harness, and a number of small arms, besides inflicting upon the enemy a loss of several millions of dollars in property destroyed. All this was accomplished with the loss of only one man, — the gallant Captain Latoné. The troops behaved nobly. Except the brief halt on Thursday night, they were in the saddle from Thursday morning until Saturday afternoon, never pausing for rest or food, but dashing on through numerous dangers, and successfully achieving what will always be regarded as one of the most brilliant feats ever performed by any cavalry.

Upon the return of the expedition, the following complimentary order was issued from the headquarters of the army.

“ HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 23, 1862.

“ GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 74.

“ The General Commanding announces, with great satisfaction, to the army, the brilliant exploit of Brigadier-General J. E. B. Stuart, with a part of the troops under his command. This gallant officer, with portions of the First, Fourth, and

Ninth Virginia cavalry, a part of the Jeff. Davis Legion, with whom were the Boykin Rangers, and a section of the Stuart horse artillery, on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of June, made a reconnoissance between the Pamunkey and the Chickahominy rivers, and succeeded in passing around the rear of the whole Federal army, routing the enemy in a series of skirmishes, taking a number of prisoners, and destroying and capturing stores to a large amount. Having most successfully accomplished the object of the expedition, he recrossed the Chickahominy almost in the presence of the enemy, with the same coolness and address that marked every step of his progress, and with the loss of but one man, the lamented Captain Latané, of the 9th Virginia cavalry, who fell bravely leading a successful charge against a superior force of the enemy. In announcing this signal success to the army, the General Commanding takes great pleasure in expressing his admiration of the courage and skill so conspicuously exhibited throughout by the General, and the officers and men under his command.

“In addition to the officers honorably mentioned in the report of the expedition, the conduct of the following privates has received the special commendation of their commanders:—Private Thomas D. Clapp, Company D, 1st Virginia Cavalry, and J. S. Mosby,* serving with the same regiment; Privates Ashton, Brent, R. Herring, F. Herring, and F. Coleman, Company E, 9th Virginia Cavalry.

By command of GENERAL LEE.

R. H. CHILTON, *A. A. General.*

* Afterwards Colonel John S. Mosby, the famous partisan leader.

XII.

GENERAL LEE'S PLAN OF OPERATIONS.

The reconnoissance of General Stuart brought to light the important fact that the Tottapotomoi, a small stream running across the Federal right flank, and naturally a very strong position, was totally undefended. General Stuart also ascertained that it was entirely practicable to gain the enemy's rear in that direction, and he was of the opinion that an attack made from the direction of Cold Harbor would result in McClellan's ruin if accompanied by a vigorous assault in front.

The information thus gained was favorable to the plan General Lee had at first proposed, and he resolved to carry it out at once. With a view to this he had, immediately upon assuming the command of the army, ordered the construction of strong defensive works along his line, which might enable a part of the army to hold the Federals in check before the city, and leave the rest free to operate against them.

The time was favorable. Jackson had prevented the junction of McClellan and McDowell, and had not only escaped from the forces of Shields and Fremont, which had been sent to cut off his retreat from the Potomac, but had defeated them, and rendered them useless for the rest of the campaign. His army was now resting near Staunton, where its communications with Richmond were uninterrupted, and it was now resolved to bring him to the Chickahominy, to unite in the great struggle for the Southern Capital. In order to induce the Federal authorities to believe that Jackson was being reënforced for a new campaign, and thus cause them to retain in Northern Vir-

ginia the troops originally intended for McClellan, as well as to blind them to Lee's real intentions, Whiting's division was sent to join Jackson. It was embarked on the cars of the Danville Railroad, and the train was halted opposite Belle Isle, which was occupied by a large number of Federal prisoners just about to be exchanged. It was designed that they should see the movement and report it to General McClellan upon their arrival at Fortress Monroe. On the 20th, the division reached General Jackson.

As soon as the information gained by General Stuart decided General Lee to adopt the plan he had at first proposed, he ordered General Jackson to move towards Richmond at once, which order Jackson proceeded promptly to execute, taking care to preserve the utmost secrecy concerning his movements.* On the morning of the 25th of June, his corps was at Ashland on the Fredericksburg Railroad, sixteen miles from Richmond, and not far from Hanover Court House. Riding on in advance, General Jackson visited General Lee's headquarters, where he was made fully acquainted with the plan of the Commanding General, after which he returned to his corps.

General Lee had determined to strike the blow at McClellan's right flank and rear. By pressing him vigorously in that quarter, and threatening his communications, it was believed that he would be compelled to retreat or give battle out of his intrenchments. The plan is stated in full in the following order : —

* As an instance of the way in which such important military secrets were kept during the war, I will state that I was told a few days before the battles began, that all the cars on the Central Railroad had been ordered towards Staunton, to bring Jackson's troops to Richmond, to aid in an attack on McClellan. My informant gave as his authority, Colonel Harman, Jackson's Quartermaster. I have no reason to believe that I was the only person so favored.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA.
June 24th, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDERS,
No. 75.

"I. General Jackson's command will proceed to-morrow from Ashland towards the Slash Church, and encamp at some convenient point west of the Central Railroad. Branch's brigade of A. P. Hill's division, will also, to-morrow evening, take position on the Chickahominy, near Half Sink. At three o'clock Thursday morning, twenty-sixth instant, General Jackson will advance on the road leading to Pole Green Church, communicating his march to General Branch, who will immediately cross the Chickahominy, and take the road leading to Mechanicsville. As soon as the movements of these columns are discovered, General A. P. Hill, with the rest of his division, will cross the Chickahominy near Meadow Bridge, and move direct upon Mechanicsville. To aid his advance, the heavy batteries on the Chickahominy will, at the proper time, open upon the batteries at Mechanicsville. The enemy being driven from Mechanicsville, and the passage across the bridge opened, General Longstreet, with his division, and that of General D. H. Hill, will cross the Chickahominy, at or near that point, — General D. H. Hill moving to the support of General Jackson, and General Longstreet supporting General A. P. Hill, — the four divisions keeping in communication with each other, and moving in echelon on separate roads, if practicable; the left division in advance with skirmishers and sharpshooters extending in their front, will sweep down the Chickahominy, and endeavor to drive the enemy from his position above New Bridge; General Jackson, bearing well to his left, turning Beaver Dam Creek, and taking the direction toward Cold Harbor. They will press forward toward York River Railroad, closing upon the enemy's rear, and forcing him

down the Chickahominy. Any advance of the enemy toward Richmond will be prevented by vigorously following his rear, and crippling and arresting his progress.

“II. The divisions of General Huger and Magruder will hold their positions in front of the enemy against attack, and make such demonstrations, Thursday, as to discover his operations. Should the opportunity offer, the feint will be converted into a real attack; and should an abandonment of his intrenchments by the enemy be discovered, he will be closely pursued.

“III. The 3d Virginia cavalry will observe the Charles City road. The 5th Virginia, the 1st North Carolina, and the Hampton Legion cavalry will observe the Darbytown, Varina, and Osborne roads. Should a movement of the enemy down the Chickahominy be discovered, they will close upon his flank and endeavor to arrest his march.

“IV. General Stuart, with the 1st, 4th, and 9th Virginia cavalry, the cavalry of Cobb's Legion, and the Jeff Davis Legion will cross the Chickahominy to-morrow, and take position to the left of General Jackson's line of march. The main body will be held in reserve, with scouts well extended to the front and left. General Stuart will keep General Jackson informed of the movements of the enemy on his left, and will coöperate with him in his advance. The 16th Virginia cavalry, Colonel Davis, will remain on the Nine Mile road.

“V. General Ransom's brigade, of General Holmes' command, will be placed in reserve on the Williamsburg road, by General Huger, to whom he will report for orders.

“VI. Commanders of divisions will cause their commands to be provided with three days' cooked rations. The necessary ambulances and ordnance trains will be ready to accompany the divisions, and receive orders from their respective commanders. Officers in charge of all trains, will invariably remain with them. Batteries and wagons will keep on the right of the road.

The Chief Engineer, Major Stevens, will assign engineer officers to each division, whose duty it will be to make provision for overcoming all difficulties to the progress of the troops. The Staff department will give the necessary instructions to facilitate the movements herein directed.

“By command of GENERAL LEE.

“R. H. CHILTON, *A. A. General.*”

“*Official.*

T. M. R. TALCOTT,

Major and Aide-de-Camp.”

Owing to unavoidable delays, all of General Jackson's command did not reach Ashland soon enough to begin the march at the time designated on the 25th, and consequently the march of his command on the 26th was much longer than had been expected.

XIII.

MECHANICSVILLE.

While the preparations of the Southern forces were going on, General McClellan was anxiously watching for something which might inform him of their intentions. After the battle of Seven Pines he proceeded to fortify his position with great care. His aggressive movements received a severe check in that battle, and from that time he turned his attention to securing himself against an attack from Lee. Instead of “driving the enemy to the wall,” he quietly resigned to them the role he had intended to play in the great drama, and during the rest of the campaign his army presented the strange spectacle of an invading force superior in numbers and resources to its enemy, anxiously awaiting attack, instead of making the assault.

At last, however, it was decided to advance the picket line, and on the 25th of June, Kearney's and Hooker's divisions made a spirited attack on the Confederate position on the Williamsburg road, held by General Huger. The effort was successfully resisted, and the Southern line fully maintained.*

General McClellan had committed a grave error in the disposition of his army. He had placed its two wings on different banks of the Chickahominy, which stream intersected his line, about the centre, at right angles. Communication between the two wings, was maintained by a series of bridges, which were approached by roads almost always difficult, owing to the marshy nature of the ground. The sudden rise of the river at the period of the battle of Seven Pines had furnished the Federal commander with a proof of its fickleness. His bridges were liable to be swept away, or the approaches to them flooded at any moment, in which event his two wings would be entirely cut off from each other. This situation exposed the wings to the danger of being attacked in detail, and, as was afterwards proved by the expedition of General Stuart, his communications with the White House his principal depot of supplies were almost at the mercy of the Confederates.

The true policy of General McClellan, after the battle of Williamsburg, was to abandon the line of the Peninsula, and,

* Brigadier General Wright, whose brigade was chiefly engaged in this affair writes as follows, in his official report: "The object of the enemy was to drive us back from our picket lines, occupy it himself, and thereby enable him to advance his works several hundred yards nearer our lines. In this he completely failed; and although General McClellan at night telegraphed, over his own signature, to the War Office in Washington, that he had accomplished his object, had driven me back for more than a mile, had silenced my batteries and occupied our camps, *there is not a word of truth in the whole statement*. When the fight ceased at dark, I occupied the very line my pickets had been driven from in the morning, and which I continued to hold until the total rout of the Federal army, on the twenty-ninth ultimo." *Rebellion Record*. Part LVII., p. 442.

after crossing the Chickahominy at some point near to its mouth, move direct to the James River, and advance upon Richmond from that direction. In doing this, the iron-clad Virginia having been destroyed and Norfolk evacuated, he could have secured, by means of his fleet, a safe passage of the Chickahominy. After reaching the James, his left flank would have rested on that stream, under the protection of his shipping, and he would have been free to use his right with a fair prospect of success. Even had he been unsuccessful in his aggressive movements it would have been impossible for the Confederates to dislodge him from his position, and his campaign might have been successful in the end. It certainly would not have been such a decided failure as it proved. These considerations were outweighed, in the mind of General McClellan, by the hope of having McDowell's corps sent to him, and his heart seems to have been set upon striking a tremendous blow with it from the North of Richmond. For this reason alone, he chose the line of the Chickahominy in preference to the line of the James. Having made this choice, and established his base of operations at the White House, it became absolutely necessary to retain a large part of his army north of the swamp for the protection of his communications with his base. He seems to have been aware of the dangers of his position, and to have contemplated a "change of base" to the James, but at the same time he feared the Confederates would anticipate him, and that his army would be obliged "to fight its way through to the James."* Upon this *intention* to move, General McClellan founds his assertion that his subsequent retreat was a voluntary "change of base." This is somewhat like an intruder who has entered a strong man's dwelling, with the *intention* of leaving it at an indefinite period, declaring,

* McClellan's Report, pp. 242, 243.

after the strong man has driven him out, that his exit is voluntary. In a certain sense all retreats are voluntary.

The knowledge of the insecurity of his position on the Chickahominy caused General McClellan to be constantly apprehensive of an attack from the Southern army. His fears were confirmed. While hesitating between an advance upon Richmond and a change of base, he was informed that General Lee had decided his course for him, and that General Jackson was moving upon his exposed right flank. This information was first imparted by a deserter from Jackson's command on the 24th of June. The intelligence was speedily confirmed by subsequent events, so that there was no doubt in the mind of the "Young Napoleon" as to the course his adversaries would pursue. On the night of the 25th of June he wrote to the Secretary of War, "I incline to think Jackson will attack my right and rear," and, judging from the general tone of his letter, he was almost as well convinced of what the result would be.*

On the morning of the 26th of June, General Jackson's command, which, as has been stated, had not been able to commence its march on the previous day, moved from Ashland for Cold Harbor, with Whiting's division in the advance, and crossed the Central Railroad (which was to have been passed on the 25th) at ten o'clock, A. M.

In the meantime General A. P. Hill had concentrated the Light Division near the Meadow Bridge, sending the brigade of General Branch to the point where the Brook road crosses the swamp. The division numbered in all about fourteen thousand men, and was supplied with seven batteries of artillery, one of which (Johnston's) accompanied General Branch.

The reader will remember that General Jackson was to notify

* McClellan's Report, p. 238.

General Branch of his advance. Branch was to cross immediately upon receiving this message, and, as soon as he had uncovered the Meadow Bridge, A. P. Hill was to pass over. General Branch did not receive General Jackson's message until ten o'clock on the morning of the 26th, owing to the delay in the latter's advance from Ashland. He immediately passed the swamp with his brigade, and moved in the direction of Meadow Bridge. He met with more opposition than he had expected, and his advance was very slow.

General A. P. Hill had expected to commence his movement early in the morning, but these unavoidable delays detained him also. He waited impatiently until three o'clock in the afternoon of the 26th of June, but no tidings came from Jackson or Branch. He knew they were engaged with the enemy, but as yet the latter had failed to open the way for him. Every moment was precious now that the movement had begun, and further delay might hazard the success of the whole plan. In view of this he determined to advance at once.

Field's brigade, which had been held in readiness, was promptly moved upon the bridge, which it captured at once. The outposts of the enemy being driven in, the whole division was enabled to cross the swamp in safety. Following the road for a few hundred yards, the command wheeled abruptly to the right, and, moving through the fields, marched direct upon Mechanicsville. The enemy greeted the advance with a heavy fire of artillery, but General Field, throwing his brigade into line of battle, with Pegram's battery in the centre, swept forward steadily, and, after a sharp conflict, drove the Federals from Mechanicsville.

Up to this time the Confederates had encountered only the advanced forces of the enemy. The real position selected by the Federals was one of great strength. It was about a mile back of Mechanicsville, and was located immediately on the left

bank of Beaver Dam Creek. This stream curves around Mechanicsville, the banks on the left or North side being higher than and commanding the country opposite. The left of the Federal line rested on the Chickahominy, and the right in the thick woods beyond the upper road from Mechanicsville to Cold Harbor. Another road crossed the creek at Ellison's Mill. These were the only roads by which the Federal line could be approached with artillery, and they were completely commanded by it. Immediately south of the creek was a valley, less than an eighth of a mile in width, which was almost too marshy to be passable for infantry. This was made still more difficult by masses of timber which had been felled along its entire course. The Federal position, naturally so strong, had been selected with great care, and was defended by several lines of infantry and artillery, (the former posted in rifle pits,) extending from the base of the hill to the top. This line was held by the corps of Major-General Fitz John Porter, General McClellan's ablest lieutenant, and it was to this stronghold that the advanced force retreated, after being driven out of Mechanicsville.

As Hill's troops pressed on, they came under the fire of the Federal guns on Beaver Dam Creek, which commanded the village and surrounding country. A brief inspection of their position satisfied General Hill that it was too strong to be carried by a direct assault, and as he momentarily expected to hear the sound of Jackson's guns on the left, he refrained from making a direct attack. A part of his force was, however, sent by the upper Cold Harbor road to force a passage there, and communicate with Jackson. A regiment succeeded in crossing to the right of the Federal works, and remained on the left bank of the Creek until dark, when it was withdrawn.

At the same time Pender's brigade was thrown forward, to the right of Field's, in an attempt to force a passage of the Creek at Ellison's Mill. He made a gallant attack, charging

several times with great vigor, but only to be driven back by the withering fire of the Federals. A part of D. H. Hill's command having now arrived, Ripley's brigade was advanced to Pender's support, and another effort was made to turn the Federal left, with the same result.

The battle ended at nine o'clock, the enemy having been driven from Mechanicsville to their works on Beaver Dam Creek, which they held successfully against all efforts to dislodge them. The Confederates passed the night on the ground they had won. Their loss was heavy, — between three and four thousand men.* The Federal loss was much smaller.

By six o'clock in the afternoon, the movements of General A. P. Hill having uncovered the Mechanicsville Bridge, the divisions of Generals D. H. Hill and Longstreet were put in motion. At nine o'clock, the greater portion of these troops were over the stream. D. H. Hill was ordered to move by the Upper Cold Harbor road, and coöperate with Jackson, while Longstreet was advanced to the support of A. P. Hill.

Thus far the plan of General Lee was successful. The four divisions were safely across the swamp, and though the Federals still held their line on Beaver Dam Creek, there was no doubt that the approach of General Jackson would force them to abandon it in order to escape from being cut off from their left wing. The result proved the correctness of this view. Soon after the close of the action, General McClellan was informed of the approach of Jackson, and, seeing his danger, he at once ordered General Porter to fall back from Beaver Dam Creek towards the New Bridge. During the night of the 26th, the greater part of the heavy guns and wagons were removed from Beaver Dam and sent to the south bank of the

* See foot-note on page 145 of Swinton's "Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac."

Chickahominy, and shortly before daylight the troops began to retire, burning such things as they could not carry off.

As I have stated, General Jackson's command crossed the Central Railroad at ten o'clock on the morning of the 26th. Whiting's division was in front, and the left flank was guarded by General Stuart, who, with his cavalry, moved a short distance in advance. As the column approached Tottapotamoi Creek, a swampy stream, with high, bold banks, covered with thick woods, the wooden bridge was discovered to be in flames, and the enemy were heard in the forest beyond, felling trees to obstruct the road. Hood's Texans were thrown forward as skirmishers, and Reilly's battery shelled the woods. The enemy were quickly driven off, the bridge was repaired, and the command crossed the creek. The march was continued, the Federal rear-guard being driven rapidly before the column, and at night General Jackson bivouacked at Hundley's Corner. During the day he had borne steadily away from the Chickahominy, and had gained ground towards the Pamunkey, thus securing a position from which he could descend the next day on the Federal rear at Cold Harbor. At daylight on the morning of the 27th, the march was resumed in the direction of Cold Harbor.

General D. H. Hill, in accordance with General Lee's order, moved at daylight on the 27th, to join General Jackson. He found the crossing of Beaver Dam Creek held by the enemy, and at once made his arrangements to turn their position. Before the attack could be commenced, however, the Federals withdrew, in obedience to General McClellan's instructions to General Porter. Hill then pushed on, and soon came up with Jackson near Bethesda Church. As he was moving upon the shorter road, he necessarily entered the main road before Whiting's division, and during the remainder of the movement, held the advance of Jackson's column.

XIV.

COLD HARBOR.

The morning of Friday, June 27th, found the Federals still in possession of their works. A sharp fire of artillery and musketry ushered in the day, and, as General Lee still expected the evacuation of the Federal line, no direct attack was made upon it. Until seven o'clock the engagement was maintained principally with artillery.

Porter's troops now withdrew from their works, and fell back rapidly, setting fire to a large amount of property in their abandoned camp, and leaving much besides uninjured. Their retreat was at once discovered, and their line immediately occupied by the Confederates. About an hour was spent in repairing the bridges, and then the pursuit began. General Longstreet was directed to move by the river road in the direction of the New Bridge, and A. P. Hill was sent towards Gaines' Mill, about a mile from Cold Harbor.

Thus, by ten o'clock in the morning, the situation of affairs was as follows: McClellan was withdrawing his right wing for a last struggle north of the Chickahominy, while the commands of Jackson, D. H. Hill, A. P. Hill, and Longstreet were moving steadily upon him. So far, everything had gone well for the Confederates.

The passage of the Chickahominy and the attack upon his right wing by the Confederates, convinced General McClellan that his plan of campaign had failed. It now remained for him to adopt some other plan. His position was for him most unfortunate, and he was compelled to choose between alternatives, each of which involved great risks. It was useless to

think of concentrating the whole army on the north bank of the swamp, and fighting for his communications with the White House, for Jackson was already in a position to seize them, and assuredly would do so before his army could be concentrated. Besides this, in case of defeat his line of retreat to the James River would be lost. He had therefore but two alternatives — either to abandon his present position and retreat, or to mass his army suddenly south of the swamp, and march upon Richmond.

The latter movement was one which required great boldness, but it was also one which promised the most brilliant results. In commencing his attack, General Lee had left on the south side only the divisions of Magruder and Huger, about twenty-five thousand men. The Federal force on that side was already about eighty thousand strong,* and the bridges connecting the two wings were in good order. By massing his army suddenly and hurling it upon the Southern line, there can be but little doubt that McClellan would have broken through it. Having gained this advantage, he could have held the bridges and fords above the New Bridge, and have prevented the passage of the swamp by General Lee in time to save Richmond.†

* All Federal accounts agree in placing the Federal force at Cold Harbor at about thirty-five thousand. The army was one hundred and fifteen thousand strong. This would place the strength of the left wing at about eighty thousand.

† General Lee, in his remarks on Magruder's report, says, "The troops on the two sides of the river were only separated until we succeeded in occupying the position near what is known as New Bridge, which occurred before 12 o'clock M. on Friday, June 27th, and before the attack on the enemy at Gaines' Mill. From the time we reached the position referred to I regarded communication between the two wings of our army as reestablished. * * The New Bridge was sufficiently rebuilt to be passed by artillery on Friday night, and the one above it was used for the passage of wagons, ambulances, and troops, early on Saturday morning. Besides this, all other bridges above New Bridge, and all the fords above that point were open to us." In spite of this, I see no

Failing to adopt this bold plan, there remained nothing but retreat, for it was morally certain that nothing could save the right wing from disaster, and its defeat involved the loss of the White House and York River Railroad.

Two lines of retreat presented themselves. The first was the same route that had been traversed by the Confederates in their retreat from Yorktown. This, however, was full of danger. It was the longer of the two, and would expose him at every step to the fierce attacks of the victorious Confederates, and might result in the ruin of his army. The other route was through White Oak Swamp to the James River. The distance was only about twenty-five miles, and the character of the country was such as would enable him not only to conceal many of his movements, but also to impede the progress of his pursuers at critical junctures. Besides this, it was the movement he had been wishing yet hesitating to make for so long a time, and if he could reach the James in safety with his army, he hoped to undertake a new campaign from that quarter against Richmond. There was, however, this difference between the movement he had wished to make and that to which he was now forced, — that the former might have been undertaken without the fearful losses of life and property which attended the latter. It would also have been an aggressive movement, and not a compulsory flight from a victorious enemy.

Having decided to retreat to the James, General McClellan proceeded to make his arrangements accordingly. It was impossible to commence the movement at once, as the presence of Jackson's command in the neighborhood of Cold Harbor endangered the safety of the whole Federal army; for should Porter

reason to change my opinion that had General McClellan promptly advanced his whole army on Friday morning, Richmond would have fallen. The mere momentum of his enormous column would have been irresistible.

be withdrawn across the stream, and the movement revealed to the Confederates, General Lee would at once throw Jackson's corps across the river at a point lower down, and occupy Malvern Hill, or some other locality, and would thus block the road to the James. It was necessary, therefore, in consequence of the bad character of the Federal position, that Porter should at least attempt to hold his ground, during the 27th — in other words that his command should be sacrificed in order to secure the safety of the rest of the army. Accordingly General Porter was ordered to evacuate his lines on Beaver Dam Creek, and fall back to the strong works at Cold Harbor.

The position selected by the Federal commander was one of great natural strength, and had been carefully fortified during the time it had been held by his troops. By a singular fatality it was destined to be the scene of two of the fiercest struggles of the whole war, each of which was to result in a Southern victory. The enemy's line was located on a range of hills extending from the Chickahominy to Cold Harbor, and was immediately behind Powhite Creek, a small, marshy stream, running through a densely wooded country. The right rested in the rear of Cold Harbor, and was posted in the woods and clearings, and the left near Doctor Gaines' house, on a wooded bluff which rose abruptly from a deep ravine leading down to the Chickahominy. "The ravine was filled with sharpshooters, to whom its banks gave protection. A second line of infantry was stationed on the side of the hill, behind a breastwork of trees, above the first. A third occupied the crest, strengthened with rifle trenches and crowned with artillery. The approach to this position was over an open plain, about a quarter of a mile wide, commanded by this triple line of fire, and swept by the heavy batteries south of the Chickahominy. In front of his centre and right, the ground was generally open, bounded on the side of our approach by a wood, with dense and

tangled undergrowth, and traversed by a sluggish stream, which converted the ground into a deep morass. The woods on the farther side of the swamp were occupied by sharpshooters, and trees had been felled to increase the difficulty of its passage, and detain our advancing columns, under the fire of infantry, massed on the slopes of the opposite hills, and of their batteries on their crests.* This line of battle formed the arc of a circle, and covered the approaches to the bridges connecting the two wings of the Federal army.

Moving on rapidly from Beaver Dam Creek, General Longstreet's division came in front of the new Federal line, about one o'clock in the afternoon. His troops were at once thrown forward to feel the enemy, taking position before the famous timber breastwork, the key-point of the whole line. At the same time A. P. Hill reached Gaines' Mill. Driving off the Federal force at that point, by a charge of Gregg's brigade, he crossed the creek, and, moving forward, formed his line of battle in the vicinity of New Cold Harbor, nearly parallel to the road leading from that place toward McGehee's house. The division had commenced the engagements with fourteen thousand men,† and had lost heavily at Mechanicsville, so that it was now barely eleven thousand strong. Yet with this force Hill was to attack thirty thousand troops strongly posted.

About half past two o'clock he opened the battle with the brigades of Gregg, Branch, and Anderson. These made an impetuous attack and were met by the Federals with great determination. Pender's brigade was sent to Branch's assistance shortly after the battle began, and Field and Archer were also thrown forward, the last two with orders to turn the Federal left. Moving forward across an open field, they were subjected to a terrible fire. The whole line being advanced, the Federal position was assailed in repeated charges. The

* General Lee's Report.

† General A. P. Hill's Report.

16th and 22nd North Carolina Infantry at one time carried the crest of the hill, and broke the Federal line, but were beaten back in a desperate struggle. Field and Archer moved steadily upon the enemy's left, but were met with such a fire that their men were forced to lie down.

Thus far every attempt to storm the Federal lines had been repulsed, and now, the enemy, encouraged by this, swept forward fiercely upon Hill's command. Many of Hill's men had never been in action before, and they shrank from a fire which was so hot that even his veterans recoiled before it. The enemy gained ground steadily, despite the desperate resistance of the Confederates, and it seemed almost certain that night would descend upon a Federal victory.

In this juncture General Lee directed General Longstreet to make a diversion on the right in favor of Hill. Moving forward promptly, Longstreet saw the immense strength of the enemy's position in his front, and knew at a glance that if he wished to render any assistance to Hill, he must convert the feint into a real attack. This, with a promptness and energy characteristic of him, he at once prepared to do. The three brigades under General Wilcox, supported by those of Pickett and R. H. Anderson, were placed in line, and directed to assault the enemy's position. Moving on, these gallant troops made a fierce attack, but were greeted with such a fire that they recoiled.

It did indeed seem that victory was to crown the efforts of the enemy. The afternoon was rapidly drawing to a close, and all the attacks of the Confederates had been unsuccessful. Suddenly the firing on the left increased in volume, rolling along the line in long, heavy peals. A great shout went up from the army, and the men cried in their joy, "It is Jackson! It is Jackson!"

It was Jackson. He had been marching rapidly all day,

assured by the firing in the direction of the Chickahominy that he would not reach the field a moment too soon. After overcoming the obstacles in his way, which were greater than he had anticipated, he reached Cold Harbor just as Longstreet made his attack on the enemy's left—about half past five o'clock. He at once brought his troops into action with D. H. Hill on the left, and to the right of him Ewell's, Jackson's, and Whiting's divisions, in the order named. Whiting was hurried forward to reënforce Longstreet, and formed on his left, uniting his own left with A. P. Hill's right. The attack was renewed, the whole line advancing at once, the movements which I shall now describe being simultaneous.

D. H. Hill's troops were the first to encounter the enemy. They moved across the swamp, the creek, the undergrowth, and obstructions in front, in the face of a heavy fire, and gallantly assailing the Federals, drove them from their first position, to a field some four hundred yards in the rear. General Hill determined to press on, but, before doing so, ordered two of his regiments to take a battery on his left which would enfilade his line in its advance. This was gallantly accomplished, and the battery was held until the division had passed over the dangerous ground, when it was retaken by the enemy. Hill continued to press the Federals back slowly until dark, when, throwing his line forward in a determined charge, in which the "Stonewall brigade" of Jackson's division joined, he drove them from the field.

General Ewell's attack was made in the neighborhood of McGehee's house. The enemy held their ground bravely, and for four hours resisted the efforts of Ewell, who, about dusk, having exhausted his ammunition, withdrew his troops a short distance to await a fresh supply. Before it came the battle was over.*

* The four brigades of Jackson's division did not act together, but were distributed among the other commands which needed reënforcements.

General Whiting was sent to the assistance of General Longstreet, and his arrival has been already mentioned. His division came into position just as Longstreet's men met their first check. The task of assaulting the Federal stronghold was committed to the Texas brigade of General Hood. An eye-witness thus describes the charge which decided the battle.

“While Hood's brigade was formed in line of battle, the 4th Texas was held in partial reserve, and soon became separated from the other regiments of the brigade. After remaining in the rear, lying down, for perhaps half an hour, General Hood came for us, and, moving by the right flank about half a mile, halted us in an open space to the right of some timber, and in rear of an apple orchard. The sight which we here beheld beggars description. The ground was strewn with the dead and dying, while our ranks were broken every instant with flying and panic-stricken soldiers. In front of us was the ‘Old 3rd brigade,’ who, but a few moments before, had started with cheers to storm the fatal palisade. But the storm of iron and lead was too severe, they ‘wavered’ for a moment, and fell upon the ground. At this instant, General Hood, who had, in person, taken command of our regiment, commanded in his clear ringing voice, ‘Forward, quick, march,’ and onward moved the little band of five hundred with the coolness of veterans. Here Colonel Marshall fell dead from his horse, pierced by a Minnie ball. Volleys of musketry, and showers of grape, canister, and shell ploughed through us, but were only answered by the stern ‘Close up—close up to the colors,’ and onward they rushed over the dead and dying, without a pause, until within about one hundred yards of the breastworks. We had reached the apex of the hill, and some of the men, seeing the enemy just before them, commenced to discharge their pieces. It was at this point that preceding brigades had halted, and beyond which none had gone, in consequence of the terrible

concentrated fire of the concealed enemy. At this critical juncture the voice of General Hood was heard above the din of battle, 'Forward, forward, charge right down on them, and drive them out with the bayonet.' Fixing bayonets as they moved, they made one grand rush for the fort; down the hill, across the creek and fallen timber, and the next minute saw our battle-flag planted upon the captured breastwork. The enemy, frightened at the rapid approach of pointed steel, rose up from behind their defences, and started up the hill at speed. One volley was poured into their backs, and it seemed that every ball found a victim, so great was the slaughter. Their works were ours, and, as our flag moved from the first to the second tier of defences, a shout arose from the shattered remnant of that regiment, and which will long be remembered by those who heard it; a shout which announced that the wall of death was broken, and victory, which had hovered doubtfully for hours over that bloody field, had at length perched upon the battle-flag of the 4th Texas. Right and left it was taken up, and rang along the lines for miles; long after many of those who had started it were in eternity." *

In this charge the gallant 4th was supported by the 1st and 5th Texas, and the 18th Georgia. Arriving at the crest of the hill no pause was made, but the line, pressing forward, drove back the enemy from their guns, and put to flight a squadron of cavalry which attempted to charge. The position was won, and other troops were hurried up to Hood's assistance. The charge cost the Confederates one thousand men, but they captured fourteen pieces of cannon and nearly a regiment of prisoners.

The key-point to the enemy's line being now in his possession,

* The Campaign from Texas to Maryland, by Rev. N. A. Davis, Chaplain 4th Texas Regiment, pp. 54, 55.

General Lee threw forward his whole force, and the Federals were driven back with irresistible fury to the Chickahominy.

It was now dark, and as the battle had greatly disarranged the Southern line, and the country being too unfavorable for a pursuit at night, the troops were halted on the ground they had won.

The Federals retreated in confusion to the bridges. A correspondent of the *New York Tribune* thus described the scene at its commencement, in a letter written at the time :

“A motley mob started pell-mell for the bridges. They were overtaken by many just from the woods, and it seemed as if Bull Run were to be repeated. Meanwhile the panic extended. Scores of gallant officers endeavored to rally and re-form the stragglers, but in vain; while many officers forgot the pride of their shoulder-straps and the honor of their manhood, and herded with the sneaks and cowards. O, that I had known the names of those officers I saw, the brave and the cowardly, that here, now, I might reward and punish, by directing upon each individual the respect or the contempt of a whole people! That scene was not one to be forgotten. Scores of riderless, terrified horses, dashing in every direction; thick-flying bullets singing by, admonishing of danger; every minute a man struck down; wagons, and ambulances, and cannon blocking the way; wounded men limping, and groaning, and bleeding amid the throng; officers and civilians denouncing, and reasoning, and entreating, and being insensibly borne along with the mass; the sublime cannonading, the clouds of battle-smoke, and the sun just disappearing, large, and blood red, — I cannot picture it, but I see it and always shall.”

This confusion and disorder was checked at the bridges. Meagher's and French's brigades crossed the swamp, and, advancing at the double quick, with fixed bayonets, brought the fugitives to a halt, when the officers immediately set to work to

restore order. They were successful, and the troops were withdrawn to the south side of the river during the night. The rear guard of Regulars crossed at six o'clock the next morning, destroying the bridge after them.

Thus closed one of the most stubbornly contested battles of the war. The Confederates enjoyed the advantage of superior numbers, but their principle attacks were made with small bodies and upon positions of immense strength. The result was not only a victory for the Confederates, but was decisive of the campaign. The losses on both sides were heavy. I have not been able to find any exact statement of them in the reports of either army. They are believed, however, to have amounted to at least seven or eight thousand in the Southern army, and six or seven thousand on the other side.*

General Lee sent the following dispatch to Richmond on Friday night :

“HEADQUARTERS June 27, 1862.

“HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT DAVIS.

“MR. PRESIDENT : Profoundly grateful to Almighty God for the signal victory granted to us, it is my pleasing task to announce to you the success achieved by this army to-day.

The enemy was this morning driven from his strong position behind Beaver Dam Creek, and pursued to that behind Powhite Creek, and finally, after a severe contest of five hours, entirely repulsed from the field.

“Night put an end to the contest. I grieve to state that our loss in officers and men is great.

“We sleep on the field, and shall renew the contest in the morning.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully,
(Signed,) R. E. LEE, *General.*”

* The loss in Jackson's corps is reported by him at three thousand two hundred and eighty-four. A. P. Hill and Longstreet, also, lost heavily.

XV.

SAVAGE STATION.

Saturday morning found the Federal army concentrated on the south bank of the Chickahominy. General McClellan had determined upon his course of action, and was now using every effort to prepare for his retreat. Amid the dangers which surrounded him, he seemed to have more of decision and vigor than he had shown at any previous time. It requires a good general to conduct a retreat in safety, especially when his army is threatened by the dangers which surrounded the Army of the Potomac at this time. McClellan proved himself equal to the task before him, and it should not detract from the credit due to him, that he enjoyed advantages of great importance over his adversary.

One of these advantages was the ignorance in which General Lee naturally remained concerning the Federal commander's real intentions. He might yet give battle for the preservation of his communications; he might attempt to retreat down the Peninsula; or, he might retreat to the James. It was necessary to await his movements. It was unfortunate that this was the case, but there was no help for it.

In order that no time might be lost, however, Ewell's division was sent to seize the York River Railroad, and Stuart was directed to coöperate with him with the cavalry. Stuart moved in advance of Ewell, and soon reached Dispatch Station. The Federal forces at this point retreated across the river in haste, burning the bridge in their rear, and Ewell coming up, destroyed a portion of the railroad. Here General Ewell halted to await further orders.

During the forenoon the clouds of dust which rose from the Federal lines south of the Chickahominy told plainly that their army was in motion. It was evident, from the absence of any Federal force on the north side of the Chickahominy, and the burning of the railroad bridge at Dispatch Station, that McClellan had abandoned the line of the York River Railroad. Still he had open to him the lower bridges of the Chickahominy, as well as the route to the James, and as the southern forces south of the river had not been able to detect any sign of a movement to the James, it was thought that he might attempt to escape down the Peninsula after all. Accordingly, General Ewell was directed to move from Dispatch Station to Bottom's Bridge, on the main road from Richmond to Williamsburg, to ascertain the movements of McClellan, and cut him off if he attempted to cross the Chickahominy at that point. He discovered no signs of such a movement, and the next day rejoined General Jackson.

Meanwhile, General Stuart, after the arrival of General Ewell at Dispatch Station, determined to push boldly down the road to the White House, in order to discover what force the enemy had there, and, if possible, to rout it. McClellan's arrangements had been already made, however. The line of the railroad had been abandoned, and the commander of the force at the White House had been ordered to send such of his stores as he could remove, and the water transportation to the James River, and destroy the remainder.

A train of forage wagons, with a cavalry escort and a few sutler's establishments, were captured by the cavalry soon after leaving Dispatch Station. At all the prominent points along the road, cavalry pickets were driven off or captured, until Black Creek was reached. Here the enemy burned the bridge, and attempted to impede the progress of the cavalry, but they were speedily put to flight and the bridge repaired. It was

now too dark to continue to advance, and General Stuart halted for the night, the men feeding their horses on corn captured at Tunstall's Station.

During the afternoon, a large fire was discovered at the White House, and all night long this continued to burn steadily, and the flames and explosions of shell and ammunition told plainly that the enemy were destroying the stores at that point.

As soon as it was day, General Stuart resumed his advance. Arriving within a quarter of a mile of the White House, he discovered a Federal gunboat at the landing. Colonel W. H. F. Lee, the proprietor of the estate, accompanied the expedition, and was ordered by General Stuart to take a party of seventy-five sharpshooters, and drive off the gunboat. This was accomplished with the aid of one piece of artillery, and the steamer set off down the Pamunkey, followed by the howitzer along the shore, which exploded its shells with great accuracy just over her decks.

General Stuart captured a large amount of provisions (delicacies as well as necessities) and forage. These were distributed among the men and horses, who were in great need of food. Besides these, "nine barges, loaded with stores, were on fire as the cavalry approached; immense numbers of tents, wagons, and cars, in long trains, loaded, and five locomotives; a number of forges; quantities of every species of quartermaster's stores and property, making a total of many millions of dollars, — all more or less destroyed."

From the White House, the cavalry moved, in compliance with an order from General Lee, to watch the lower bridges of the Chickahominy.

The force which had been left by General Lee to hold the works in front of Richmond, consisted, as has been stated, of the divisions of Generals Magruder and Huger. General Holmes' command, about six thousand strong, was stationed

in the vicinity of New Market, near the James River, to watch the enemy in that direction, and prevent them from reaching the river. These commands were charged to be extremely vigilant, and to report instantly any movements on the part of the enemy.

During the 26th and 27th, the Federal lines were closely observed, but nothing unusual was noticed. On the 28th, General Toombs, without asking or receiving instructions to that effect, attacked the Federal works on Golding's farm, and was repulsed with heavy loss. Fortunately, the enemy did not follow up this ridiculous movement of General Toombs by an advance of their line. Had they done so, they might have captured Garnett's farm, and inflicted considerable injury upon the Confederates.

The day was spent in watching the enemy, whose powerful works effectually concealed their movements. At dark they were in possession of the Federal troops, and to all appearance fully manned. It was impossible to bring the Southern army across by the bridges in the Federal rear, as these were all destroyed, and their reconstruction impracticable in the presence of McClellan's whole army and powerful batteries. It was certain, however, that this suspense must be ended in some way in a few hours more, and on Saturday night General Lee directed the troops of Magruder and Huger to sleep on their arms, in order to move forward the instant the enemy's withdrawal should be discovered. General Lee was convinced from the indications in his front, that a general movement was going on in the Federal lines, and as there were no signs of McClellan attempting to move down the Peninsula, there could be no doubt that he was retreating to the James River.

General Lee was right. On Saturday morning Keyes' corps, which held the extreme left of the Federal line, broke up its camp, and entered White Oak Swamp. By noon it had

safely traversed this gloomy morass, and had occupied strong positions on the opposite side to protect the passage of the army. This was followed by the withdrawal of the wagons, five thousand in number, and a drove of twenty-five hundred beef cattle, all of which had to pass the swamp by one single road. During the night Porter's corps withdrew, also. The corps of Sumner and Heintzelman, and Smith's division of Franklin's corps were instructed to remain on the Richmond side of White Oak Swamp during the whole of the 29th, until dark, in order that the trains might get fairly out of danger. So well did McClellan mask these movements, that, although General Lee suspected them, the truth was not known until Sunday morning at sunrise, when the Federal works were found to be deserted.

Early on the morning of the 29th Longstreet and A. P. Hill were ordered to recross the Chickahominy at the New bridge, and follow the enemy along the Darbytown road to the Long bridge; Huger was ordered to pursue by the Charles City road, so as to take the Federal army in flank; Magruder was ordered to move by the Williamsburg road, and attack the enemy in the rear; and Jackson was directed to repair Grapevine bridge, cross there, move down the Chickahominy by way of Savage Station, and coöperate with Magruder. These dispositions would, it was believed, effectually prevent the escape of the enemy, and result in the capture or destruction of the greater portion of their army.

All the columns but that of General Jackson moved early on Sunday morning. Jackson was detained all day repairing Grapevine bridge, and did not cross the Chickahominy until the night of the 29th.

General Lee's dispositions were excellent, but McClellan had gained twenty-four hours, and this, together with the nature of the country through which he was moving, gave him advantages

of which no pursuit, however vigorous or well planned, could deprive him.

Magruder moved early in the morning, and, advancing through the deserted works of the enemy, — meeting on every hand large quantities of stores and property, a part in an excellent state of preservation, and the remainder more or less injured, — reached Savage Station late in the afternoon. Here he found the corps of General Sumner, which constituted the rear guard of the Federal army. Magruder at once attacked with McLaws' division, and two regiments of another division. A severe action ensued, lasting two hours, when darkness put an end to it. Sumner held his ground, and during the night of the 29th withdrew across White Oak Swamp, destroying the bridges after him. The enemy destroyed large quantities of stores at Savage Station. Several hundred prisoners were taken, and the Federal dead and wounded, together with much property, and a large hospital, containing twenty-five hundred patients, fell into the hands of the Confederates. Unfortunately the necessary medical stores and supplies for the hospital were destroyed by the enemy, and the Confederates were not able to replace them.

XVI.

FRAZIER'S FARM.

The retreat of the Federal army was conducted with the utmost vigor. Before entering upon a narration of the events which followed the battle of Savage Station, it will be interesting to glance at the condition of the retreating army as it struggled through the dangerous morass. The following vivid description is from the pen of a distinguished Northern author :

“To some of the sufferers death was coming every hour. * * All the day of Saturday the regiments of the right wing of the national army, were marching rapidly by Savage Station, taking the road towards the James River. Frequent scouts were sent out to give warning of any approach of the enemy. The road led through a region of impenetrable swamps and forests, where it would be very easy to entrap an army into ambuscades. The negroes, always our fast friends, lent us invaluable aid in these emergencies. They were our only guides. The country had not been explored by our cavalry, and our retreating troops struggled through these entangling mazes led only by the ignorant but faithful contrabands. * * * * *

“The route of the retreating army was directly through the heart of White Oak Swamp. Multitudes of wounded men hobbled along in the melancholy train. All the ambulances which could be found were loaded with such sufferers as it was possible to move. A large number who could not be moved were left to the tender mercies of the enemy. * * * * *

“At ten o'clock Saturday night the last of the Union troops left Woodbury bridge. A single company of cavalry had been left to guard the passage. As night came on, that they might deceive the rebels, they lighted camp-fires as for a vast army. The fires of the rebels gleamed brilliantly on the opposite banks. The scene presented was solemnly sublime. The night was dark, and gathering clouds threatened a tempest. The exhausted soldiers could not stop for rest. All the night long onward they dragged their weary limbs.

“It was about six miles from Savage Station to White Oak Swamp bridge. This whole distance was jammed full of wagons, horses, cannon, ambulances, pontoon boats, and all the indescribable *material* of a great army. There were frequent halts when the current became clogged. The scene of

confusion which then ensued beggars description. Twenty wagons would often be side by side. The efforts of the officers to push the line along, the shouting of the teamsters, the struggling of the horses, the occasional break-downs presented a picture of tumult which Babel could hardly have surpassed. During the whole of the day there was but little fighting, as our movements were concealed from the knowledge of the enemy. * * * *

“The sun of the Sabbath morning, June 29th, rose over this scene of tumult and consternation. It ushered in one of the most glaring and sultry of summer days. The heat was all but insupportable. * * * * Early in the morning the whole army, with all its vast artillery and baggage trains, was on the move. * * * There was not a breath of air. The sun poured down fiercely upon the unsheltered heads of the troops. There was an incessant rattle of musketry, and roar of artillery. As we were slowly driven along we were compelled to leave our dead and many of the severely wounded behind us. The hurry was so great and the heat so intolerable, that the troops threw away their knapsacks and their outer garments, but desperately clenched their weapons, which they would surrender only with their lives.

“Many, from the effect of sunstroke, dropped by the wayside, foaming at the mouth and raving in delirium. During most of this time round shot and shells from the enemy's artillery were dropping in our ranks. Occasionally, as our rear-guard made a stand, a fierce battle ensued. * * * *

“Gathering clouds in that rainy land had brought the day to an early close, and a stormy night set in. * * * On, on pressed the rear-guard through the Egyptian darkness of the tempest-riven night, — the forest illumined by incessant flashes of lightning, and the heaviest peals of thunder breaking over their heads. All arms of the service were mixed and crowded

together in the narrow road, while still, a degree of order was preserved far better than could have been supposed possible. Columns of infantry, gun-carriages, squadrons of cavalry, were all commingled, while the gleaming lightning flashed along the bayonets and bright bands of the muskets, in strong contrast with the dark mass surging onward like a swollen stream.

“The entire capacity of the road was filled with the moving multitude, as were, also, the fields beside the road wherever the ground was sufficiently firm. The whole line of the retreat was marked by abandoned baggage wagons, broken-down caissons, and all the debris of a routed army. It was observed that the men spoke in low tones of voice. All loud noises were avoided as the rear-guard pressed on, hoping to get through the swamp before the dawn of morning. * * * * Now and then, all along the lines, soldiers, utterly exhausted, would throw themselves down for a few moments’ sleep, and then, terrified lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy, would spring up, and, not more than half awake, toil painfully on.”*

It was indeed a fearful march; one that few armies could have made so well.

General Jackson’s corps reached Savage Station early on the morning of the 30th of June. He was directed to pursue the enemy by the road he had taken, and Magruder to follow Longstreet by the Darbytown road. As General Jackson advanced, with D. H. Hill’s division in front, he captured about a thousand prisoners, and so many arms that the 5th and 4th North Carolina regiments had to be detached to take care of them. Pressing on, he reached the crossing at White Oak Swamp. There he found the bridge destroyed, and the enemy in force, holding the opposite side. Twenty-eight guns from Hill’s and Whiting’s divisions were brought up, and about half

* Heroic Deeds of Heroic Men. By Rev. J. S. C. Abbott. Published in Harper’s Magazine.

past two o'clock on Monday afternoon, opened on the enemy, driving them back a short distance to the cover of the woods. A skirmish line was thrown across the Creek, but was quickly driven back, and until dark the enemy disputed the ground so vigorously that Jackson was held in check, although the artillery and musketry in the direction of the further end of the swamp, told him plainly that Longstreet was hotly engaged. It was impossible to move on, however. There was but one narrow crossing-place, and that was so completely commanded by the enemy that it would have been madness to attempt to force it.

Thus, while Jackson was compelled to remain idle, important events were transpiring beyond the swamp. Longstreet had marched rapidly, and on Monday afternoon arrived in the vicinity of the Quaker road, by which the Federal army was hurrying to the James. The Long Bridge road intersects the Quaker road at right angles, very near the point where the latter plunges into White Oak Swamp. A little nearer to the swamp the Charles City road enters the Quaker road. Longstreet was moving by the Long Bridge road, and Huger by the Charles City road, while Jackson was advancing upon the Federal rear along the Quaker road by which the Federal army was retreating. Should these columns unite, or fall upon him simultaneously, General McClellan would be ruined. Lee's whole army would then be united, and he would be at their mercy. If, however, he could prevent the union of these forces, he might bring his army safely by the dangerous locality. This accomplished, his whole army would be united almost within sight of the James, and in the open country; and should Lee continue to advance, the whole Federal force could be brought against him. To accomplish this difficult and dangerous task three things were necessary, — to prevent Jackson from passing White Oak Swamp, to hold the New Market cross roads

(the point of intersection of the Quaker and Long Bridge roads) against Longstreet until the army had passed by in safety, and to prevent the column of Huger from uniting with Longstreet. The first, as we have seen, was successfully done, and Huger, whose movements were much slower and more cautious than they should have been, was detained on the Charles City road until Tuesday morning.

To resist the advance of Longstreet who arrived about one o'clock in the afternoon, McClellan posted McCall's division of Pennsylvania Reserves, at the intersection of the roads, forming the line across the New Market road, at right angles to it, and in front of and parallel to the Quaker road. Kearney's division was on McCall's right, Sumner's corps was on McCall's left, and a short distance in rear of it, and Hooker's division was on Sumner's left.

Upon reaching the field Longstreet formed his line with his own division on the right, and that of A. P. Hill on the left.

General Holmes, who had been ordered to watch the enemy in the vicinity of Malvern Hill, reported their arrival in that direction, and, as he believed they were approaching in much confusion, he was ordered to open on them with his artillery. He was prevented from accomplishing anything by the fire of a superior force of Federal artillery, assisted by several gunboats in the James. Magruder, who had reached the Darbytown road, was ordered to reënforce Holmes, but the distance being greater than was at first supposed, he did not reach the latter in time to attack the enemy.

Huger early in the day reported that his progress was obstructed, but as his orders were to push forward as rapidly as possible, it was confidently expected that he would come up during the afternoon. Thus when Longstreet formed his line of battle on Frazier's Farm, General Lee, who had placed himself with this part of the army, fully expected to use the

commands of Huger and Jackson in his attack upon the enemy, being ignorant of the forced halt of the latter in White Oak Swamp.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, firing was heard in the direction of the Charles City road. As it was believed that these were Huger's guns, Longstreet opened with one of his batteries to announce his presence. Huger did not arrive, however, and the enemy holding Jackson in check, the attack was made with but the two divisions of Longstreet and A. P. Hill.

The firing of Longstreet's guns was replied to by a heavy cannonade from the enemy, and this brought on the engagement. Longstreet at once threw forward his infantry, assailing McCall's left. McCall met this demonstration promptly by a change of front on that flank, and the battle raged with great violence. The nature of the ground was such that concert of action, so essential to success, could not obtain.* Still the Confederates pressed forward vigorously, steadily pushing back the enemy, who were in greatly superior force, and whose splendid artillery was magnificently served.

Finding himself opposed by such heavy force, General Longstreet, soon after the battle opened, ordered General A. P. Hill to send a brigade to the left to the support of the troops engaged there, and shortly afterwards Hill's whole division was ordered to advance. Hill moved forward rapidly, and fell upon the enemy with vigor. Seeing that the Federal batteries were doing great execution by their accurate and rapid fire, his men were ordered to charge them. The order was promptly executed. The 60th and 55th Virginia dashed forward upon two batteries of Napoleon guns. The enemy made a stout resistance, gallantly defending their guns to the last. A sharp hand-to-hand fight, in which bayonet wounds were freely given and returned, ensued, but at length the Federals were driven back,

* General Longstreet's Report.

and the guns remained in the hands of their captors. The 47th Virginia also took a battery, and turned its guns upon the enemy, doing great execution, and materially assisting General Gregg's brigade which was hotly engaged on the left. Towards dark, this same regiment captured Major-General McCall, the Commander of the Pennsylvania Reserves.

Night had now fallen over the field, and the battle was still raging. The enemy had been driven steadily at all points save one — their right. The ground had been contested and won inch by inch. The enemy clung to this part of the field with a desperate resolution, and held it until the firing ceased at nine o'clock that night. With the exception of the Federal right, the entire field was left in possession of the Confederates, into whose hands also fell the Federal dead and wounded. Had Huger arrived in time to assail their right, as was expected, a great disaster would have befallen them. In consequence of his absence, and that of General Jackson, the Federal Army was enabled to pass from White Oak Swamp towards the river with no greater loss than that suffered in the battle of Frazier's Farm.

Having accomplished this, McClellan withdrew Franklin's command from the swamp, and the next morning Jackson crossed over, and rejoined the army on the battle-field of the previous night.

In this engagement the enemy suffered a loss of many prisoners, including Major-General McCall, fourteen pieces of artillery, and several thousand small arms. The Southern loss is not stated.

A severe blow had been inflicted upon the enemy, but McClellan, owing to the failure of Generals Jackson and Huger to reach the field in time, had been enabled to bring his whole army out of the swamp in safety, and this more than repaid him for the losses suffered in the battle. During the night his

troops were silently withdrawn, and moved back toward Malvern Hill.

XVII.

MALVERN HILL.

The morning of July 1st found the entire Confederate army concentrated on the battle-field of Frazier's Farm. With the battle of the previous evening the dangers which had threatened McClellan really ended. Up to that time it had been within the power of the Confederates to fall upon the flank of his army, and cut it asunder. This should have been accomplished, and had General Huger been more energetic and vigorous in his movements this fate would have befallen the Federal army. But this unfortunate delay was taken advantage of by McClellan. Jackson's progress was checked at White Oak Swamp, and Longstreet was held at bay long enough for his army to pass in safety beyond its pursuers. It was now impossible to prevent him from reaching the James, for by the 30th of June his advance had gained the river, his artillery and trains were parked in the rear of Malvern Hill, and communication had been opened with the gunboats. The entire Federal army was concentrated on the morning of the 1st of July, in a strong position, and ready to oppose the Confederates with a solid front.

The task before General Lee was now to bring McClellan to a general battle, which should either annihilate his army, or secure its safe passage over the few miles which lay between it and the river. Magruder had been recalled from General Holmes' position, during the night of the 30th of June, and had been ordered to relieve the divisions of Longstreet and A.

P. Hill after the close of the battle. On the morning of the 1st, General Jackson was ordered to continue the pursuit down the Willis Church road, and soon afterwards he came in sight of the Federal position at Malvern Hill.

General McClellan had chosen his ground well. "The left and centre were posted on Malvern Hill, an elevated plateau about a mile and a half by three fourths of a mile in area; the right was 'refused,' curving back through a wooded region towards a point below Haxall's Landing, on James River. Judging from the obvious lines of attack that the main effort would be made against his left, General McClellan posted on Malvern Hill heavy masses of infantry and artillery. Porter's corps held the left, and the artillery of his two divisions, with the artillery reserve, gave a concentrated fire of sixty guns. Couch's division was placed on the right of Porter; next came Kearney and Hooker; next, Sedgwick and Richardson; next, Smith and Slocum; then the remainder of Keyes' corps, extending by a backward curve nearly to the river."* Immediately in front of this position the ground was open, varying in width from a quarter to half a mile, and sloping gradually from the crest, and was swept at every point by the fire of the Federal artillery and infantry. In order to reach this open ground, the Confederates had to pass through a broken and thickly wooded country, which was almost too swampy to be traversed, and which was commanded by the Federal batteries and the gunboats in the river. These kept up a constant fire, and all the movements of the Confederates had to be made under a heavy shower of shell.

General Jackson formed his line at once — Whiting's division was on the left, and D. H. Hill's on the right, with one of Ewell's brigades covering the space between. The rest of Ewell's men and Jackson's division were held in reserve. Ma-

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 161.

gruder was placed on the right of D. H. Hill, with three brigades of Huger's division between Hill and himself, these brigades being under his command. Owing to the lack of information concerning the character of the country, it was near the close of the afternoon before the entire line was formed. Longstreet and A. P. Hill were held in reserve, and took no part in the engagement.

It was General Lee's order that a strong force of artillery should be brought up to silence the Federal batteries and shatter their infantry supports. As soon as this was accomplished, Armistead's brigade, of Huger's division, was to advance with a loud shout, at which signal the whole line was to sweep forward and carry the heights by storm. Owing to the nature of the ground the artillery could not be brought up in time, and the Confederates could oppose to the magnificent batteries of the Federals only eight or ten guns, which were soon disabled.

About six o'clock General D. H. Hill heard on his right a loud shout, followed by heavy firing. This he supposed to be the signal agreed upon, and in this opinion he was sustained by all his brigade commanders. He at once threw forward his division. He made his attack gallantly, but had scarcely begun it before he discovered that he was not supported by any other division, and that he had been deceived in regard to the signal to advance. He was opposed to the entire army of the Federals, who seeing his condition, threw their line forward upon him. In this critical situation he sent to General Jackson for reinforcements. Jackson at once advanced his whole reserve, but owing to the difficult character of the ground, and the rapid approach of night, the reinforcements did not reach Hill in time to assist him, and the gallant General after suffering a heavy loss, and causing the Federals to pay dearly for their success, was compelled to retire from the open field.* During the remainder of the engagement Jackson's artillery kept up a

* Gen. Jackson's Report.

steady fire upon the enemy, but his infantry made no further attempt to storm their position.

As soon as General Magruder had formed his line, and discovered the great strength of the Federals, he directed his chief of artillery to bring up thirty pieces of rifled cannon, with which he hoped to open the way for a successful charge. These were not brought forward during the engagement. While awaiting the arrival of the guns, Magruder prepared his infantry for the assault, and while thus engaged, received an order from General Lee to charge with his whole force as soon as he should hear Armistead's signal shout. Soon after this, he received another order directing him to advance his whole line rapidly, and follow up Armistead's success, "as the enemy were reported to be getting off." General Armistead had repulsed, driven back, and followed up a heavy body of the enemy's skirmishers, and it was believed that this was a favorable moment for a decisive charge.

Although General Magruder feared that the enemy's position was still too strong to be successfully assailed by infantry, he did not feel at liberty to disregard the positive instructions he had received, and at once made his preparations to advance. Several vigorous efforts were made to carry the heights by storm. The brigades advanced gallantly across the open field, their ranks torn and shattered by the showers of shell and Minnie bullets which swept through them. Some regiments were broken and driven back at once; others pressed on and reached the batteries, but only to be thrown back with horrible slaughter. Thus the battle continued until nine o'clock at night, when the firing ceased. An eye-witness thus describes the attack of Magruder's men:—

"Thirty-seven pieces of artillery, supported at a greater distance by heavy and more numerous batteries, and by his gunboats, kept faithful ward over the enemy's position, and

ploughed through our columns even before they could see the enemy or deploy into line of battle. Undismayed by the most terrific cannonading of the war, the advance of Magruder's forces commenced. Onward, in the face of a storm of shot and shell, they pressed forward, until within musket-range of the enemy, and then they opened their fire. Whole lines of the enemy fell as they stood, or, attempting to retreat, were overtaken by the bullets of our troops, who never veered in their aim or recoiled while the enemy's infantry remained in range; and when forced back for a time by the avalanche of converging artillery, yet when the infantry of the enemy ventured again beyond their batteries, our lines advanced with shout and bayonet, and drove them back among the reserves and behind the wall of fire which flamed along the mouths of the circling cannon. Thus the contest ebbed and flowed until night spread its mantle on the battle-field. The batteries of the enemy were not captured by assault, because no line of men could live in their converging fires, sweeping unobstructed the attacking forces for twelve hundred yards, but his line of infantry was repeatedly broken with frightful slaughter by the fierce charges of our troops, who held their position and slept on the field, within one hundred yards of the enemy's guns."

During the night McClellan withdrew his forces, and took the road to Harrison's Landing and Westover. Although he had succeeded in repulsing the Confederate attacks, his army had suffered frightfully, so that it became an absolute necessity to withdraw, under the immediate protection of the gunboats. The attacks of the Confederates had been so fierce, and had caused such suffering in his ranks, that his army, already shaken by its terrible retreat and constant fighting, was in reality demoralized by this last blow, and so great was this demoralization that the Federal Commander was not willing to risk another encounter even in this strong position.

At sunrise the next morning the Federal lines were found to be deserted. The Federal dead and wounded were left on the field, as were also two pieces of artillery, which had been spiked, and a number of caissons, wagons, ambulances, and large quantities of medical, commissary, and ordnance stores. Large supplies of ammunition were thrown into the neighboring ravines, and on all sides were to be seen evidences of a disorderly and precipitate retreat.

The Confederate loss at Malvern Hill was five thousand and twenty-three. That of the enemy is not known, but is supposed to have been somewhat larger.

XVIII.

THE END OF THE PURSUIT.

Wednesday morning, July 2d, broke in the midst of a heavy rain, which continued throughout the day. The Federal army fell back rapidly to Harrison's Landing, which was reached in safety. From the evidence taken by the Committee on the Conduct of the War, in the Federal Congress, there can be no doubt that had General Lee pressed on after McClellan, the Northern army would have been ruined. It was in no condition to withstand a new attack.

General Lee, as soon as he found that McClellan had withdrawn from Malvern Hill, threw forward the cavalry, which had come up during the night of the first, in pursuit, and followed with his infantry. General Stuart pressed vigorously upon the Federal rear, constantly skirmishing with the rear-guard, and capturing prisoners. By reconnoitring the country thoroughly, he found that the entire Federal force was collected on the river shore between Westover and Harrison's

Landing. He also learned that there was in the rear of the Federal position a plateau, known as Evelington's Heights, which completely commanded their camp. On the morning of the 3rd General Stuart continued his advance, and gained possession of the heights, driving off the single squadron which held them. As soon as he had learned the nature of this position on the previous evening, he had informed General Lee of it, sending the message through General Jackson, and he now held the ground, hoping that General Lee would send a column to relieve him. At the same time he opened one gun upon the enemy's camp below, producing great commotion in it. General Stuart learned from prisoners taken, that the Federal force was much reduced and demoralized. General Lee was kept informed of these movements, and sent word to General Stuart that Jackson and Longstreet were on the march to support him.

Stuart held the hill from nine in the morning until two in the afternoon, when he withdrew before a strong force of infantry and artillery which was advancing from the Federal camp. General Longstreet was led out of his route by an incompetent guide, and did not arrive until night, when his command halted at the line occupied by the cavalry, a short distance from the hill. During the night the enemy secured the plateau, and strengthened their position with earth works.

The next day, July 4th, General Longstreet made a reconnaissance of the enemy's new position. They were found to occupy the plateau in strong force. Their position on the river was one of great natural strength. It was flanked on each side by a creek, and was defended by earthworks and the direct fire of the gunboats. In view of this, it was decided not to attack the enemy.

The 5th, 6th, and 7th of July were spent in watching the enemy, and collecting the abandoned and captured property and

stores which were strewn over the battle-fields from Mechanicsville to the James River. Much of the spoils was lost to the Government in consequence of the plundering of the battle-fields by the citizens of Richmond and the surrounding country.

On the morning of the 5th, General Stuart was directed to take a battery of rifled guns, and proceed to some point on the river, below Westover, and annoy the Federal transports in their progress up the stream. He at once set out for Wilcox's Landing, which he reached at dark. During the night one transport was fired into, evidently without receiving much damage, as she kept on up the river. The next day two more guns were added to the battery, and the command moved to Wayne's Oak, lower down the river. During that night, and the next day, the 7th, several transports were fired into and seriously damaged. Two were abandoned by their crews, who made for the south bank of the river, in small boats, leaving one of the vessels sinking. The batteries were constantly subjected to the fire of the gunboats convoying the transports, but without receiving any damage. On the afternoon of the 7th, the batteries returned to their camps, the men being greatly exhausted by their loss of rest, and constant exertion.

On the afternoon of the 8th it was decided by General Lee to withdraw from the enemy's front, and return to the vicinity of Richmond. The movement was successfully executed, the cavalry preventing the Federals from detecting it. General Lee selected as his new position, a line extending from the James River at Chafin's Bluff, to the Chickahominy near Garnett's farm, and there prepared to await the future movements of the "Young Napoleon."

Practically, the campaign was a success for the Confederates. The siege of Richmond was raised, the enemy driven from the strong positions which they had selected with so much care, and forced to destroy millions of dollars worth of stores and

property. They had been driven over an extent of twenty-five miles, and compelled to undergo fearful sufferings which resulted in their demoralization. They owed their escape to the favorable nature of the country through which they moved, as well as to the great skill of their general. "Under ordinary circumstances they should have been destroyed," says General Lee, but they escaped. On the morning after the battle of Malvern Hill it was in General Lee's power to crush them, and even as late as the day Stuart occupied Evelington's Heights, a determined attack, or a vigorous cannonade from that quarter would have destroyed what there was of organization left to them. The latter portion of the Confederate pursuit, however, was too feeble and spiritless to accomplish anything, and the best opportunity Lee ever had for destroying the Army of the Potomac was suffered to pass unimproved. In the general joy at the forced retreat of McClellan from the Chickahominy, the Southern people were not disposed to find fault with their General for not accomplishing more. They were satisfied with what was done.

In the retreat from the Chickahominy General McClellan exhibited high qualities. It is true that his movements were greatly favored by the country he marched through, but to have brought his army off safely in the presence of a powerful and victorious foe, holding his ground whenever it was necessary to gain time, and always being enabled to present a steady front to the columns of his pursuers, was an achievement of which any general might well be proud, and which ought to have gone far to atone for the faults of his campaign. And surely the army that could, amidst such terrible suffering and disaster, always be ready to fight all night and march all day, bearing its reverses with unflinching courage, must meet, as it deserves, the hearty praise of both friend and foe. Yet in spite of this, the Federal Commander saw fit, on the 4th of July, to issue to

his army an address better suited to a victorious than a defeated host.

The Confederate loss, during the campaign, was heavy, embracing many officers of rank and several general officers killed and wounded. It was, as well as I can ascertain, about nineteen thousand, five hundred and thirty-three killed, wounded and missing.*

The Federal loss in men was also very heavy. General McClellan reports it at one thousand, five hundred and eighty-two killed, seven thousand, seven hundred and nine wounded, and five thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight missing, making a total of fifteen thousand, two hundred and forty-nine. A careful research has convinced me that this number is too small. General Lee states that more than ten thousand prisoners were captured by his army, and from what I saw of them myself, I am convinced that the number is not exaggerated, so that, at the lowest, the Federal loss in killed, wounded, and missing, was over twenty thousand. Among the prisoners were several general officers. Fifty-two pieces of artillery and upwards of thirty-five thousand stand of small arms were captured. The stores and supplies of every description were great in amount and value, but small in comparison with those destroyed by the enemy.†

*The returns of the various divisions of the Confederate Army are incomplete. Jackson reports a total loss of five thousand, three hundred and eighty-three, including D. H. Hill's division. Longstreet reports his loss at four thousand, four hundred and twenty-nine; A. P. Hill reports his loss at three thousand, eight hundred and seventy; Magruder reports his at three thousand, three hundred; Holmes, his at eight hundred and fifty-one. I have been unable to find any returns from Huger or Stuart. I have estimated the loss of the former at twelve hundred, which is, perhaps, too great, and that of the latter at five hundred. Huger was not so actively engaged as the other Commanders, and did not lose so heavily.

† General Lee's Report.

While in front of the Federal position on the James, General Lee issued the following address to his army : —

“HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD,
July 7, 1862.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 75.

“The General Commanding, profoundly grateful to the Giver of all victory for the signal success with which He has blessed our arms, tenders his warmest thanks and congratulations to the army by whose valor such splendid results have been achieved.

“On Thursday, June 26th, the powerful and thoroughly equipped army of the enemy was intrenched in works vast in extent and most formidable in character, within sight of our Capital.

“To-day the remains of that confident and threatening host lie upon the banks of the James River, thirty miles from Richmond, seeking to recover, under the protection of his gunboats, from the effects of a series of disastrous defeats.

“The battle beginning on the afternoon of the 26th of June, above Mechanicsville, continued until the night of July 1st, with only such intervals as were necessary to pursue and overtake the flying foe. His strong intrenchments and obstinate resistance were overcome, and our army swept resistlessly down the north side of the Chickahominy, until it reached the rear of the enemy, and broke his communication with the York, capturing or causing the destruction of many valuable stores, and, by the decisive battle of Friday, forcing the enemy from his line of powerful fortifications on the South side of the Chickahominy, and driving him to a precipitate retreat. This victorious army pursued, as rapidly as the obstructions placed by the enemy in his rear would permit, three times overtaking his flying column, and as often driving him with slaughter from

the field, leaving his numerous dead and wounded in our hands in every conflict.

“The immediate fruits of our success are the relief of Richmond from a state of siege, the rout of the great army that so long menaced its safety, many thousand prisoners, including officers of high rank, the capture or destruction of stores to the value of millions, and the acquisition of thousands of arms, and fifty-one pieces of superior artillery.

“The service rendered to the country in this short but eventful period can scarcely be estimated, and the General Commanding cannot adequately express his admiration of the courage, endurance, and soldierly conduct of the officers and men engaged.

“These brilliant results have cost us many brave men ; but while we mourn the loss of our gallant dead, let us not forget that they died nobly in defence of their country’s freedom, and have linked their memory with an event that will live forever in the hearts of a grateful people.

“Soldiers ! your country will thank you for the heroic conduct you have displayed, — conduct worthy of men engaged in a cause so just and sacred, and deserving a nation’s gratitude and praise.

“By command of GENERAL LEE.

“R. H. CHILTON, *A. A. General.*”

President Davis, who had been upon the field constantly during the six days, and had witnessed the conduct of the army, tendered to it the thanks of the country in the following address : —

“RICHMOND, July 5, 1862.

“TO THE ARMY IN EASTERN VIRGINIA.

“Soldiers : I congratulate you on the series of brilliant victories which, under the favor of Divine Providence, you have

lately won ; and, as the President of the Confederate States, do heartily tender to you the thanks of the country whose just cause you have so skilfully and heroically served. Ten days ago an invading army, greatly superior to you in numbers and in the material of war, closely beleaguered your Capital and vauntingly proclaimed its speedy conquest ; you marched to attack the enemy in his intrenchments ; with well-directed movements and death-defying valor you charged upon him in his strong positions, drove him from field to field over a distance of more than thirty-five miles, and, despite his reënforcements, compelled him to seek safety under cover of his gunboats, where he now lies cowering before the army so lately derided and threatened with entire subjugation. The fortitude with which you have borne toil and privation, the gallantry with which you have entered into each successive battle, must have been witnessed to be fully appreciated ; but a grateful people will not fail to recognize your deeds and to bear you in loved remembrance. Well may it be said of you that you have ‘ done enough for glory,’ but duty to a suffering country and to the cause of constitutional liberty claims from you yet further effort. Let it be your pride to relax in nothing which can promote your future efficiency — your one great object being to drive the invader from your soil, and carrying your standards beyond the outer boundaries of the Confederacy, to wring from an unscrupulous foe the recognition of your birth-right — community independence.

(Signed)

JEFFERSON DAVIS.”

XIX.

THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

Those who study this campaign from a military point of view, will agree with me that the danger which threatened Richmond was far greater with McClellan on the James River than it was while he remained on the Chickahominy. In his present position the Federal commander was always assured of the safety of his left flank which rested on the river, while he was enabled to receive in his future movements the active coöperation of his fleet. It was not possible for the Confederates to drive him away now, and should he determine to make another attempt to capture Richmond, it would be found difficult if not impossible to defeat him. It was also within his power to cross the James, and attack Petersburg, the capture of which would compel the evacuation of Richmond. He could also prevent the movement of any considerable body of the Confederate army northward, and was really in a position to do far better service for his Government than he could possibly perform elsewhere. He had saved from his army eighty-five thousand men, and over one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. It was in the power of his Government to double this number within a few weeks, and this would have been its wisest policy, for it would have effectually prevented the disasters which subsequently befell it in Northern Virginia.

General McClellan urged the Federal authorities to reënforce him to their utmost ability, and forcibly pointed out to them the advantages which would result from such a course. Rising above his misfortunes, and fully comprehending the grand opportunity before him, he formed the bold plan of crossing to

the south side of the James, and attacking Petersburg. He communicated this plan to the Federal Commanding General, Major-General Halleck, while that officer was on a visit to the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, towards the last of July, but General Halleck, who enjoyed one of those cheap military reputations of which the war afforded so many instances, regarded the plan as dangerous and impracticable,* and went back to Washington to oppose it. Immediately the Government withdrew what little support it had previously given to the plan, and declined to reënforce General McClellan. Burnside's corps, which was at Fortress Monroe, waiting to be sent to him, was ordered to the Potomac, and soon events in another quarter caused McClellan and his army to be almost forgotten. Nevertheless, General McClellan was right, and the best proof of the soundness of his views is the success which attended this identical plan when executed by General Grant in 1864 and 1865.

General Lee was very anxious that McClellan should withdraw from the James river, for he fully understood what lay within the power of the Federal commander should he feel strong enough to attempt it. In order to watch the enemy, and guard that part of the country General D. H. Hill's division was sent to the south side of the James.

The corps of General Jackson was now detached from the army, and sent to Gordonsville, to meet the advance of the enemy in that quarter, and was soon followed by the division of A. P. Hill.

At the same time, "in order to keep McClellan stationary, or, if possible, to cause him to withdraw," General Lee sent a force of forty-three guns to Coggin's Point, immediately opposite Harrison's Landing, to open fire on the Federal camp and shipping. The expedition reached the appointed place at nightfall

*Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac — pp. 167, 168.

on the 31st of July. The guns were at once placed in position. The Federal shipping lay within a mile of the Southern shore, and immediately back of the vessels was a large encampment. The glittering lights on shipboard and on the shore afforded a clear mark for the gunners, and the fleet and camp of the enemy lay in profound silence, unconscious of the danger which threatened them.

Half an hour after midnight, the stillness of the scene was broken by the simultaneous reports of the forty-three cannon, and, the action once opened, the Confederates continued to fire rapidly. "From the screams, scenes of wild confusion must have followed, as sailors rushed on the decks of their vessels, and soldiers fled from their tents in midnight darkness, amidst bursting shells, falling fast around them. The gunboats soon returned the fire, and in about fifteen or twenty minutes a rapid fire was opened on the Confederates from the Federal land batteries, but without any damage, many of the shots passing over the whole length of the point or peninsula. The red glare of the fire of so many guns and exploding shells, on such a night, is seldom witnessed. Gradually the firing on the part of the Confederates ceased, and the guns were withdrawn under a heavy fire."* The number of rounds for the guns was limited to about one thousand in all.

The enemy were badly frightened, but they sustained no material damage. The next day General McClellan sent a force across the river, and occupied Coggin's Point, after which he was not troubled again by such nocturnal visitors. The Southern loss was one man killed, and two wounded.

Toward the last of July, a raiding party of cavalry from General Pope's army in Northern Virginia, destroyed a part of the Central Railroad at Beaver Dam Station, in order to cut Jackson's communication with Richmond. The damage they

*Report of Brig. Gen. S. G. French.

inflicted was slight, but, in order to put a stop to this, General Stuart was directed to move from Hanover Court House, where the cavalry were encamped, towards Fredericksburg. He was delayed by high water until the 4th of August, when he advanced, with Fitzhugh Lee's brigade and the Stuart Horse Artillery, upon Port Royal. He reached that town on the 5th, and at once moved towards Fredericksburg. The next day he came into the telegraph road, at Massaponax Church, just after two brigades of Federal cavalry had passed by towards the Central Railroad. Stuart at once attacked them so vigorously that they returned in haste to Fredericksburg, losing eighty prisoners and a number of wagons. Stuart then retired, having lost only two men.*

On the 5th of August, the Federals occupied Malvern Hill in force, taking up the same positions they had held during the battle of July 1st. The divisions of Longstreet and McLaws, and that commanded by Ripley at once moved down the Long Bridge road, and, upon reaching Malvern Hill, discovered the Federals in great force in their old lines.

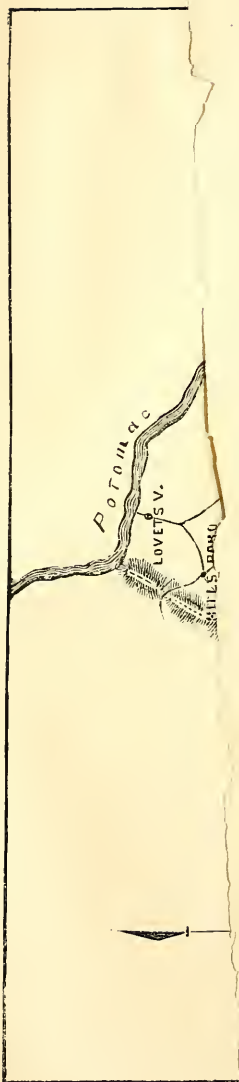
General Lee formed his army with McLaws on the left, then Ripley, then D. R. Jones, who had now come up, and with Longstreet on the right. The left was ordered to advance to Willis' Church, and threaten the communication with Westover, by extending well to the left, and Longstreet was directed to move on Malvern Hill, and drive the enemy from their position on Curl's Neck. This was promptly done, and the Federals were driven back to their guns on Malvern Hill.

It was now too dark to attempt any further movements, and the army bivouacked for the night. The next morning it was found that the enemy had retreated to Westover. The picket lines were reestablished, and the Confederates returned to their former positions.

*Gen. Lee's Report.

This movement was the last made by McClellan previous to his withdrawal from the Peninsula. The reasons which caused the abandonment of the campaign by the Army of the Potomac will be discussed in another part of this work. Here I can only mention the fact. The evacuation of Harrison's Landing was commenced on the 16th, a part of the army and the stores being sent off by water, and the remainder taking the route down the Peninsula to Yorktown and Fortress Monroe, and by the 18th the rear-guard had crossed the Chickahominy.

As soon as he was satisfied that McClellan was withdrawing from the James River, General Lee put his army in motion for General Jackson's position on the Rapidan, where it arrived about the fifteenth of August.



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IV.

THE CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA.

AUGUST, 1862.

I.

GENERAL POPE IN VIRGINIA.

THE doubt in which the Federal authorities were left by the disappearance of General Jackson's army from the Valley of Virginia, was decided by the sudden and fatal blow which he struck their army at Cold Harbor. He was no longer in a position to threaten Washington, but he had produced such a wholesome dread of his sudden movements that President Lincoln and his military advisers resolved to retain a large force between Washington and the Rappahannock. Accordingly the commands of Fremont and Banks were moved east of the mountains, and together with McDowell's corps were consolidated into one command, numbering in all about sixty thousand men, under the name of the "Army of Virginia."

The command of this army was conferred upon Major-General John Pope, who had been one of General Halleck's division commanders in the West, where he had distinguished himself by the paper victories he had won over imaginary enemies. He had been selected by General Halleck to seize the prize which had thus far eluded the grasp of the "Young Napoleon."

He was a queer compound of ordinary good sense, and the most egregious folly. As a subordinate commander, under an able leader, he might have achieved considerable success, for he had an abundance of energy, but he was totally unfit for the chief command of an independent army. Nevertheless the Federal Government professed to see in him an undeveloped Napoleon. He began his career in the East by regretting that he had never had an opportunity to end the war, and pompously declaring to the Committee on the conduct of the war that if he could have such an army as McClellan's, he would march from Washington to New Orleans in triumph.*

Impressed by the preposterous assertions of General Pope, the Federal Government assigned him to the command of the new army on the 25th of June 1862, the day before the battle of Cold Harbor, with the distinct understanding that, although his first duty was to cover Washington, his campaign was to result in the capture of Richmond by an overland advance.†

The defeat of the Army of the Potomac following immediately, plunged the North into the deepest gloom, and the enemies of General McClellan, headed by General Halleck and Secretary Stanton, forgetting, or ignoring the great service he had rendered his country in averting the greater disasters which would have befallen his army but for his skill and energy, set to work to effect his ruin. So bitter was the war waged upon him that they were willing to sacrifice the advantages of the line of the James River in order to wreak their vengeance upon him. Doubtless one cause of their hostility to him was the fact that he wished to conduct the war upon humane and enlight-

* "*Question.* Suppose you had the army that was here on the first day of March last, do you suppose you would find any obstacle to prevent your marching from here to New Orleans?

"*Pope.* *I should suppose not.*" Report on the Conduct of the War. Vol. i. p. 282.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 169.

ened principles, while they were anxious to visit upon the South the full measure of their bitter hatred. They found a congenial spirit in General Pope, and forthwith set to work to induce the President to order McClellan to withdraw from the Peninsula and unite his army with that of General Pope.

Mr. Lincoln was really anxious that General McClellan should have his own way, but he was no soldier, and was surrounded by men who, though trusted by him, were hostile to the commander of his best army, foremost among whom was that military wonder, Major-General Pope, and it is not strange that he should have consented to withdraw McClellan. On the 3d of August he directed General McClellan to withdraw his army from the Peninsula to Aquia Creek, there to make a junction with Major-General Pope.

Had Mr. Lincoln known what he was doing, he might have hesitated. In withdrawing McClellan he was doing exactly what General Lee wanted him to do, and at the same time extinguishing his last chance for the speedy ending of the war. But I must not anticipate events.

About this time the measures of the Federal Government were marked by more vigor than ever. In the West and South they had opened the entire Mississippi River, except at Vicksburg. New Orleans and Memphis were in their possession, and the Western army, under General Beauregard, had fallen back from Corinth to Tupelo. The defeat of McClellan somewhat dashed the hopes which these successes had raised, and the efforts of his enemies struck a harder blow at the cause of the Union than had been dealt by the Confederates at any point between the Chickahominy and the James. Instead of despairing, however, President Lincoln called for three hundred thousand additional troops, and enormous bounties were offered to secure them; the quotas of the States were ordered to be raised by drafting; the Congress passed a bill confiscating the

slaves of all persons adhering to the Southern cause. Another law authorized the enrolment of negro troops; another authorized the military commanders of the Union to seize and use any property, real or personal, belonging to Southern sympathizers, "necessary or convenient for their commands," without compensation to the owners. The Southern States were thus placed beyond the pale of the law of nations, and the barbarous programme of the Radicals was inaugurated.

Before setting out for the headquarters of the army, General Pope issued an address to his troops, which is so characteristic that I cannot refrain from presenting it here. It is as follows:—

"WASHINGTON, July 14, 1862.

"TO THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE ARMY OF VIRGINIA:—

"By special assignment of the President of the United States, I have assumed command of this army.

"I have spent two weeks in learning your whereabouts, your condition, and your wants; in preparing you for active operations, and in placing you in positions from which you can act promptly and to the purpose.

"*I have come from the West, where we have always seen the backs of our enemies,—from an army whose business it has been to seek the adversary, and to beat him when found,—whose policy has been attack, and not defence.*

"In but one instance has the enemy been able to place our Western army in a defensive attitude.

"*I presume that I have been called here to pursue the same system, and to lead you against the enemy.* It is my purpose to do so, and that speedily. I am sure you long for an opportunity to win the distinction you are capable of achieving. That opportunity I shall endeavor to give you.

"Meantime, I desire you to dismiss from your minds certain phrases which I am sorry to find much in vogue amongst you.

“ I constantly hear of taking strong positions and holding them — of lines of retreat and bases of supplies. Let us dismiss such ideas. The strongest position a soldier should desire to occupy is one from which he can most easily advance against the enemy.

“ Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents, and leave our own to take care of themselves. Let us look before and not behind. Success and glory are in the advance. Disaster and shame lurk in the rear. Let us act on this understanding, and it is safe to predict that your banners shall be inscribed with many a glorious deed, and that your names will be dear to your countrymen forever.

*“ JOHN POPE, Major-General Commanding.” **

The arrival of General Pope's Army in Northern Virginia was the signal for the inauguration of a policy which will ever be famous for its barbarity and brutality — a policy directly in accordance with the measures of the Federal Government which I have already noticed. General Pope issued a series of General Orders which will not be soon forgotten in Virginia. The first directed the seizure of the property of Southern sympathizers.† Another declared his purpose to hold unoffending

* The italics in the above address are my own.

† This order was as follows :

“ HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF VIRGINIA,
Washington, July 18, 1862.

“ GENERAL ORDER,
No. 5.

“ Hereafter, as far as practicable, the troops of this command will subsist upon the country in which their operations are carried on. In all cases supplies for this purpose will be taken by the officers to whose department they properly belong, under the orders of the commanding officers of the troops for whose use they are intended. Vouchers will be given to the owners, stating on their face that they will be payable at the conclusion of the war, upon sufficient testimony being furnished that such owners have been loyal citizens of the United States since the date of the vouchers. Whenever it is known that supplies can be furnished in any district of the country where the troops are

citizens responsible for the conduct of the Southern troops. Feeling some doubt as to the safety of his communications, as well as that of the troops left to protect them, he bethought himself of the measures which are announced in the following order :

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF VIRGINIA,
WASHINGTON, July 18, 1862.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 7.

“The people of the Valley of the Shenandoah and throughout the region of operations of this army, living along the lines of railroad and telegraph and along the routes of travel in the rear of the United States forces, are notified that they will be held responsible for any injury done the track, line, or road, or for any attacks upon trains or straggling soldiers, by bands of guerillas in their neighborhood.

“No privileges or immunities of war can apply to lawless bands of individuals, not forming part of the organized forces of the enemy, nor wearing the garb of soldiers, who, seeking and obtaining safety on the pretext of being peaceful citizens, steal out in the rear of the army, attack and murder straggling soldiers, molest trains of supplies, destroy railroads, telegraph lines, and bridges, and commit outrages disgraceful to civilized people and revolting to humanity.

“Evil-disposed persons in the rear of our armies, who do not themselves engage directly in these lawless acts, encourage them by refusing to interfere, or to give any information by which such acts can be prevented or the perpetrators punished. Safety of the life and property of all persons living in the rear

to operate, the use of trains for carrying subsistence will be dispensed with as far as possible.

By Command of MAJOR-GENERAL POPE.
GEORGE D. RUGGLES, *Colonel, A. A. G. and Chief of Staff.*”

of our advancing army depend upon the maintenance of peace and quiet among themselves and upon the unmolested movements through their midst of all pertaining to the military service. They are understood distinctly that the security of travel is their only warrant of personal safety.

“It is, therefore, ordered that whenever a railroad, wagon road, or telegraph, is injured by parties of guerillas, the citizens living within five miles of the spot shall be turned out *en masse* to repair the damage, and shall, beside, pay to the United States, in money or in property, to be levied by military force, the full amount of the pay and subsistence of the whole force necessary to coerce the performance of the work during the time occupied in completing it.

“If a soldier or legitimate follower of the army be fired upon from any house, the house shall be razed to the ground, and the inhabitants sent prisoners to the headquarters of this army. If such an outrage occur at any place distant from settlements the people within five miles around shall be held accountable, and made to pay an indemnity sufficient for the case. Any persons detected in such outrages, either during the act or at any time afterward, shall be shot without waiting civil process. No such acts can influence the result of this war, and they can only lead to heavy affliction to the population to no purpose.

“It is therefore enjoined upon all persons, both for the security of their property and the safety of their own persons, that they act vigorously and cordially together to prevent the perpetration of such outrages. Whilst it is the wish of the General commanding this army that all peaceably disposed persons who remain at their homes and pursue their accustomed avocations shall be subjected to no improper burthen of war, yet their own safety must of necessity depend upon the strict preservation of peace and order among themselves. And they

are to understand that nothing will deter him from enforcing promptly and to the full extent every provision of this order.

“By command of MAJOR-GENERAL POPE.

“GEORGE D. RUGGLES,
Colonel A. A. G. and Chief of Staff.”

These orders, brutal as they were, were followed by one from Brigadier General Steinwehr, who quickly proceeded to the execution of the duty entrusted to him. This order is as follows :—

“HEADQUARTERS 2D DIVISION,
GREEN’S FARM, July 13, 1862.

“SPECIAL ORDER,
No. 6.

“Major William Steadman, commanding 6th Regiment Ohio Volunteer cavalry will cause the arrest of (5) of the most prominent citizens in Luray, Page county, Virginia, and, send them to these headquarters with an escort as hostages. They will be held as long as we remain in this vicinity. They will share my table and be treated as friends; but, for every one of our soldiers who may be shot by ‘bushwackers,’ one of these hostages will suffer death, unless the perpetrators of the deed are delivered to me. It is well known that these so-called ‘bushwackers’ are inhabitants of the district, and encouraged in their cowardly acts by the prominent citizens here.

“You will leave a copy of this order with the family of each man arrested by you.

A. STEINWEHR,
Brig. Gen. Commanding 2d Division.”

Had the facts been as General Pope stated them, there might, perhaps, have been some excuse for these extreme measures. They were, however, greatly exaggerated by him. The persons attacking his soldiers and cutting his railroads were

troops regularly mustered into the Confederate service, and acting under the orders of the Confederate Government. The roads were cut, and the Federal soldiers shot in fair and legitimate warfare, and the charges of murder and other crimes brought against the Confederates by General Pope, are wholly without foundation. The truth is, that he hoped to overawe and terrify the Virginians into submission, and was simply carrying out the barbarous programme of the Radicals, whose military leader he was. The honest soul of General McClellan would have shrunk from such acts.

General Pope, however, was not satisfied with this. In order to place his yoke still more effectually upon the people of Virginia he issued the following, which is generally known as his "Expatriation Order."

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF VIRGINIA,
July 23d, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 11.

" Commanders of army corps, divisions, brigades, and detached commands, will proceed immediately to arrest all disloyal male citizens within their lines, or within their reach in rear of their respective commands. Such as are willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, and will furnish sufficient security for its observance, shall be permitted to remain at their homes, and pursue in good faith their accustomed avocations. Those who refuse shall be conducted South, beyond the extreme pickets of this army, and be notified that if found again anywhere within our lines, or at any point in rear, they will be considered spies and subjected to the extreme rigor of military law. If any person having taken the oath of allegiance, as above specified, be found to have violated it, he shall be shot, and his property seized and applied to the public use.

" All communication with any person whatever living within

the lines of the enemy is positively prohibited, except through the military authorities and in the manner specified by military law; and any person concerned in writing or in carrying letters or messages in any other way will be considered and treated as a spy within the lines of the United States army.

“By command of MAJOR-GENERAL POPE.

“GEO. D. RUGGLES, *Col. and Chief of Staff.*”

This order caused the greatest dismay among the citizens. In the condition of the South at that time, banishment from their homes meant to be consigned to the greatest suffering, perhaps to starvation, and the alternative of taking an oath to support the Government of the United States was something from which they shrank with horror. The people of the village of Little Washington, in Rappahannock County, where General Pope's headquarters were at that time located, appointed a committee to wait upon General Pope, and request him to rescind his order. The committee were granted an interview, and Doctor Bishaw, laid before the General the petition of the people. He described to him the terrible suffering which would be brought upon the country by the execution of this order, and informed him that one of its effects would be to place at least six new regiments in the Southern army. “We can't take the oath of allegiance,” said the Doctor, “and we won't — man, woman, or child, — but we will give a parole to attend to our own business, afford no communication with the South, and quietly stay upon our premises.”

“I shall enforce the order to the letter,” said General Pope. “I did not make it without deliberation, and if you don't take the oath you shall go out of my lines.”

Encouraged by the orders of their commander, the Federal troops were quick to inflict suffering and loss upon the citizens. Some idea may be formed of their conduct from the following

letter of the Correspondent of the "New York World," written from Culpepper Court House, July 31st. -

"The Army of Virginia has undergone a marked change in a very important particular. The new usage which has been instituted in regard to protection of Confederate property and the purpose of the Government to subsist the army as far as practicable upon the enemy's country, has produced a decided revolution in the feelings and practices of the soldiery, and one which seems to me very much to be regretted.

"Unless these innovations are guarded by far more stringent safeguards against irregular and unauthorized plundering, we shall let loose upon the country at the close of the war, a torrent of unbridled and unscrupulous robbers. Rapid strides toward villany have been made during the last few weeks. Men who at home would have shuddered at the suggestion of touching another's property, now appropriate remorselessly whatever comes in their reach. Thieving, they imagine, has now become an authorized practice, and, under the show of subsisting themselves, chickens, turkeys, hams, and corn, have become a lawful plunder, with little discrimination as to the character or circumstances of the original owner.

"In a state of society where civil law has been laid aside, and military power exercises but an irregular and partial sway, men's consciences are not remarkably sensitive. Restraints innumerable control the propensities of men at home, which here at the wars are entirely inactive, and a very mild opiate is sufficient to give quietude to the conscience of many a soldier when a chicken, pig, ham or other luxury tempts his gustatories. These new orders seem to be just that opiate, and they have carried many a hitherto honest man over the dam, and made those who were before somewhat predatory in their habits, open, unblushing rascals.

"It is to me a very serious and unfortunate state of facts

when soldiers will rush in crowds upon the smoke-house of a farmer, and each quarrel with the other to get the first and greatest share. I blush when I state that on the march through a section of country, every spring-house is broken open, and butter, milk, eggs and cream are engulfed, almost before the place is reached by the men. Calves and sheep, and, in fact, anything and everything serviceable for meat or drink, or apparel, are not safe a moment after the approach of the army. Even things apparently useless are snatched up, because, it would seem, many men love to steal.

“ At a place where I not long ago spent a night, scarcely an article to which the fertility of a soldier could suggest the slightest use remained to the owner upon the following morning. There had been soldiers there, you might wager. Pans, kettles, dishcloths, pork, poultry, provisions, and everything desirable had disappeared. The place was stripped, and without any process of commissary or quartermaster. So it has been in innumerable instances. Many a family incapable of sustaining the slightest loss has been deprived of all.

“ I not long ago saw a dozen soldiers rushing headlong through a field, each anxious to get the first choice of three horses shading themselves quietly under a tree. The animals made their best time into the farthest corner of the field with the men close upon them; and the foremost ones caught their prizes and bridled them as if they had a perfect immunity in such sort of things. A scene followed. A young lady came out and besought the soldiers not to take her favorite pony. The soldiers were remorseless and unyielding, and the pony is now in the army.

“ I know a case where a family were just seating themselves to supper. Soldiers came that way, and going in, swallowed everything. That was not all, but whatever in doors and out of doors the soldiers wanted was readily appropriated, and the

proprietor of the place told me sorrowfully that they had ruined him — he never could now get out of debt. I hardly regretted his misfortune so much, on his account as for the influence of this thieving upon the soldiers. I was really gratified to hear his little boy say, “Pap says he wouldn’t vote the secession ticket again if he had the chance.” His patriotism was evidently drawing too heavily upon his fortunes, and I was rejoiced to find him in an inquiring state of mind. But unless a check is given to this promiscuous and unauthorized plundering, the discipline and value of the army will be destroyed; and when the enlistments have expired, we shall let loose a den of thieves upon the country.

“One favorite form in which this will exhibit itself is in the passing of Philadelphia Confederate notes. Whenever we advance into a new section, the floodgates are immediately opened, and the *fac-simile* Confederate notes are poured out upon the land. They pass readily, and seem to be taken gladly for whatever is held for sale. Bank notes and shimplasters are given for change. Horses and other valuable property are often purchased with this bogus currency. A party of soldiers entered a store, not long since, fortified with exhaustless quantities of V’s and X’s, and commenced trade. Forty pounds of sugar was first ordered, and the storekeeper, pleased with the sudden increase of business, called in his wife to assist in putting up the sweetness in small parcels. Seventy-five cents a pound was the cost. That was a small matter. Matches were purchased. Twenty-five cents per box was the charge. Tobacco also found a ready market. Each man provided himself with a straw hat; but the crowning act of all was the abstraction from the till of money already paid to the dealer for his goods, and the purchase of more goods with the same spurious medium.

“Various arguments are used to justify this practice. They may not be such as would pacify a sensitive conscience, but they are made to answer in want of better ones. The genuine Confederate money, they say, payable six months after a treaty of peace with the United States, is entirely worthless, and the spurious can be no less so. Then some contend that to depreciate the enemy's currency by any means is one of the wrongs which war makes right, and the more it is done the more the cause is helped. Still others think that the more injury is done to Confederates in any way, the sooner the rebellion will be crushed. ‘They (the Confederates) must begin to feel it in their pockets,’ is a favorite phrase. And so these practices are going on until, I believe, if it is not checked, we shall unfit the men to be soldiers now or citizens hereafter. Such has been the influence of these new orders, — this new way of dealing with the Confederates. The Government has decided to subsist the army from the enemy's country, and to give no safeguards to disloyal people. The soldiers conclude that they are individually to take whatever subsistence they can lay hands upon, and disregard all the rights of private citizens.”

General Pope afterwards declared that these things were unauthorized by him. I have shown, even at the risk of being tedious, that they were the consequences of his orders. I shall now show that he took care to remove the only obstacle that lay in the way of his men in committing these outrages. Some of his subordinates, more humane than himself, placed guards over private property, to save the unoffending owners from loss. When this was reported to General Pope, he put a stop to it, and left the people at the mercy of the plunderers. The following is his order to this effect : —

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF VIRGINIA,
WASHINGTON, July 25.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 13.

“Hereafter no guard will be placed over private houses or private property of any description whatever. Only commanding officers are responsible for the conduct of the troops under their command, and the articles of war and the regulations of the army provide ample means for restraining them to the full extent required for discipline and efficiency. Soldiers were called into the field to do battle against the enemy, and it is not expected that their force and energy shall be wasted in protecting private property of those most hostile to the Government. No soldier serving in this army shall be hereafter employed on such service.

“By command of MAJOR-GENERAL POPE.

(Signed)

GEO. D. RUGGLES,

Col. A. A. G. and Chief of Staff.”

So infamous were the outrages of the Federal commander and his army, that it became necessary for the Confederates to adopt decisive measures to check them. There was but one course to pursue, — to execute the stern law of “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life.” This alone could remedy the evil, and for this reason the Confederate Government resolved upon retaliating upon the enemy the sufferings inflicted by them upon the helpless citizens within their lines. Yet, with a noble moderation, the South refrained from proceeding at once to execute its threats, hoping that the avowal of its purpose would cause a change in the policy of the Federals. Accordingly, on the 1st of August, General Lee was ordered by President Davis to communicate to the Federal Commander-in-Chief, the following order of retaliation : —

“ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL’S OFFICE.
RICHMOND, August 1, 1862.

“GENERAL ORDERS.

No 54.

“I. The following orders are published for the information and observance of all concerned :

“II. *Whereas*, by a General Order, dated the 22nd of July, 1862, issued by the Secretary of War of the United States, under the order of the President of the United States, the military commanders of that Government, within the States of Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas, are directed to seize and use any property, real or personal, belonging to the inhabitants of this Confederacy which may be necessary or convenient for their several commands, and no provision is made for any compensation to the owners of private property thus seized and appropriated by the military commanders of the enemy ;

“III. And *whereas*, by General Order No. 11, issued on the 23d July, 1862, by Major-General Pope commanding the forces of the enemy in Northern Virginia, it is ordered that ‘all commanders of any army corps, divisions, brigades, and detached commands, will proceed immediately to arrest all disloyal male citizens within their lines or within their reach in rear of their respective commands. Such as are willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, and will furnish sufficient security for its observance, shall be permitted to remain at their homes and pursue in good faith their accustomed avocations. Those who refuse shall be conducted South, beyond the extreme pickets of this army, and be notified that, if found again anywhere within our lines, or at any point in rear, they will be considered spies and subjected to the extreme rigor of military law. If any person having taken the oath of allegiance as above specified be found to have violated it, he shall be shot, and his property seized and applied to the public use ;’

“IV. And *whereas*, by an order issued on the 13th July, 1862, by Brigadier-General A. Steinwehr, Major William Steadman, a cavalry officer of his brigade, has been ordered to arrest five of the most prominent citizens of Page county, Virginia, to be held as hostages, and to suffer death in the event of any of the soldiers of said Steinwehr being shot by ‘bush-whackers,’ by which term are meant the citizens of this Confederacy who have taken up arms to defend their homes and families ;

“V. And *whereas*, it results from the above orders that some of the military authorities of the United States, not content with the unjust and aggressive warfare hitherto waged with savage cruelty against an unoffending people, and exasperated by the failure of their effort to subjugate them, have now determined to violate all the rules and usages of war, and to convert the hostilities hitherto waged against armed forces into a campaign of robbery and murder against unarmed citizens and peaceful tillers of the soil ;

“VI. And *whereas*, this Government, bound by the highest obligations of duty to its citizens, is thus driven to the necessity of adopting such just measures of retribution and retaliation as shall seem adequate to repress and punish these barbarities ; and *whereas*, the orders above recited have only been published and made known to this Government since the signature of a cartel for exchange of prisoners of war, which cartel in so far as it provides for an exchange of prisoners hereafter captured, would never have been signed or agreed to by this Government if the intention to change the war into a system of indiscriminate murder and robbery had been made known to it ; and *whereas*, a just regard to humanity forbids that the repression of crime which this Government is thus compelled to enforce should be unnecessarily extended to retaliation on the enlisted men in the army of the United States, who may be unwilling instruments

of the savage cruelty of their commanders, so long as there is hope that the excesses of the enemy may be checked or prevented by retribution on the commissioned officers who have the power to avoid guilty action by refusing service under a Government which seeks their aid in the perpetration of such infamous barbarities ;

“ VII. Therefore *it is ordered*, that Major-General Pope, Brigadier-General Steinwehr, and all commissioned officers serving under their respective commands, be, and they are hereby, expressly and specially declared to be not entitled to be considered as soldiers, and, therefore, not entitled to the benefit of the cartel for the parole of future prisoners of war.

“ *Ordered further*, that in the event of the capture of Major-General Pope or Brigadier-General Steinwehr, or of any commissioned officer serving under them, the captive taken shall be held in close confinement so long as the orders aforesaid shall continue in force and unrepealed by the competent military authorities of the United States ; and that in the event of the murder of any unarmed citizen or inhabitant of this Confederacy, by virtue, or under pretext, of any of the orders hereinbefore recited, whether with or without trial, whether under pretence of such citizen being a spy or hostage, or any other pretence, it shall be the duty of the commanding general of the forces of this Confederacy to cause immediately to be hung, out of the commissioned officers, prisoners as aforesaid, a number equal to the number of our own citizens thus murdered by the enemy. By order.

(Signed)

S. COOPER,

Adjutant and Inspector-General.”

This order was at once communicated to the Federal Government by General Lee.* It had the desired effect. On the

*See Note A at the end of this Volume.

15th of August, a General Order was issued from the Federal War Department (General Order, No. 107) affording such remedies as were deemed satisfactory by the Confederates, and Major-General Pope also modified his former orders to a great degree. This officer had the unblushing impudence to declare that his orders had been either greatly misinterpreted or abused by his army. However, the evil was checked. It is an important fact, that the measures of the Federal Government were not taken until they had received the warning given by the Confederates. There being no further necessity for retaliation on the part of the Confederates, the order given above was rescinded, and on the 24th of September, ninety-seven of Pope's officers, who had been detained as hostages were released.

Nevertheless, Pope did his work well. When he entered the Rappahannock district it was in a prosperous and flourishing condition. When he left it the country was almost a wilderness, and the people were reduced to beggary and starvation. Major Cooke in his "Life of Stonewall Jackson," states that when he passed through Culpepper County, in August 1862, it was as much as he could do to procure food for himself and forage for his horse.*

II.

CEDAR RUN.

When General Pope took command of the "Army of Virginia," his first care was to collect its scattered members into one compact mass. This gave him a force of about sixty thousand men, in front of Washington. About the 1st of July he

*Life of Stonewall Jackson. By John Esten Cooke. Appleton & Co's edition. p. 254.

commenced to move this body along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, toward the Rappahannock, threatening both Gordonsville and Charlottesville. Should he succeed in occupying these places, he would cut General Lee's communications with South-western Virginia. The movement was dictated by a sound military policy, and the Federals were hopeful of its success.

To guard against this danger General Lee detached General Jackson's corps, consisting of Jackson's and Ewell's divisions, from the army before Richmond, and sent it to Gordonsville by railroad, where it arrived on the 19th of July.

As soon as he reached Gordonsville General Jackson proceeded to ascertain the strength and position of the enemy. He found that General Pope had advanced to the Rapidan, and was threatening the Central Railroad and its connections, and that the Federal army far outnumbered his own, which was simply the force with which he had fought his brilliant campaign in the Valley. As his own strength was not sufficient to enable him to make a stand against the enemy, he sent to General Lee for reënforcements, and received the division of A. P. Hill.

It was necessary to prevent the Federal army from reaching the railroad, and, as the best means of doing this, General Jackson determined to fall suddenly upon Pope's army, which lay near Culpepper Court House, and either defeat it before reënforcements should reach it, or deal it a blow that would stop its advance for the time.

While matters were still in this uncertain state the advanced forces of the two armies came into collision. Colonel Wm. E. Jones, with the 7th Virginia cavalry, was sent to take charge of the outposts on the Rapidan. Arriving near Orange Court House, he found the town occupied by a large Federal cavalry force. By a bold and decisive charge he drove the enemy from the town, but they soon rallied, and in their turn, drove

him back to the place where the engagement began. They withdrew soon afterwards.

Having determined to attack Pope, General Jackson left Gordonsville on the 7th of August and moved towards the Rapidan. On the morning of the 8th, the Federal cavalry on the north bank were driven over the river by the brigade of General Robertson, and were forced back in the direction of Culpepper Court House. As they subsequently threatened the train of Jackson's division, Lawton's brigade, of Ewell's division, was detached to guard it, and consequently took no part in the battle which ensued.

The infantry and artillery followed the cavalry across the Rapidan, and took the road to Culpepper. The next day, the 9th, the army reached the vicinity of Cedar Run, about eight miles from Culpepper Court House, where the enemy was found in strong force. When first seen, their cavalry were drawn up on a ridge to the right of the road. Terry's battery was thrown forward to drive them back, which was successfully accomplished, the enemy replying with their artillery. Soon afterwards the cavalry re-occupied their first position.

The Federal force consisted of Banks' corps, which had been thrown forward by General Pope to meet Jackson's advance. He held a strong position, and had with him about twenty-eight thousand men.

Jackson at once commenced to form his line. Ewell's division, which was the only part of his command that had come up, was thrown forward to secure a position on the slope of Slaughter's Mountain, which would enable his artillery to command the Federal line. The division moved forward, with Early's brigade in the advance. Early formed his line on the right of the road, and moving across the open field, drove back the enemy's cavalry to the crest of a hill which overlooked the entire space in his front. As he commenced to mount this hill,

the Federal artillery opened a heavy fire upon him, and large bodies of Federal cavalry appeared in the fields on his left. Sheltering his troops under the hill, Early advanced three guns of Dement's battery to the crest, and replied with spirit to the fire of the enemy's artillery.

Jackson's division had now arrived, and was moved forward to Early's assistance, a part being held in reserve. As it came into line, its gallant commander, Brigadier-General Charles S. Winder, was mortally wounded by the explosion of a shell. The command of the division then passed to Brig.-Gen. Wm. B. Taliaferro.

During this time General Ewell, with the brigades of Trimble and Hays, had been moving towards the position assigned him, and which he successfully occupied. It was on the north-west termination of Slaughter's Mountain, about two hundred feet above the valley below. He posted Latimer's battery in a favorable spot, and opened with marked effect on the Federal guns. For two hours a sharp "artillery duel" went on between the two armies. Jackson was not yet ready to make the attack, as he was waiting for A. P. Hill's division to come up.

About five o'clock, General Banks threw forward his skirmishers, and advanced his infantry, which had until then been concealed in the woods to the rear and left of his batteries. Another body of infantry suddenly appeared from a valley in which they had been concealed, and moved upon Early's right, which rested near a clump of trees where his artillery (Brown's and Dement's batteries) was posted. Banks made a sharp attack, and the battle soon extended along the Southern left and centre.

The first attack was made upon Early, who being hard pressed, called for reënforcements. Under the cover of this attack, Banks massed his infantry on his right, and a little after five o'clock made a sudden rush at the Confederate left, and

beating back the force there by the weight of his column and the impetuosity of his assault, turned the flank, and gained the Confederate rear. Taliaferro's brigade was driven back in confusion, followed by Early's left, and it seemed that the whole line would give way before the enemy, who advanced with loud cheers and great rapidity.

At this moment, when the fate of the army seemed decided, A. P. Hill's division arrived on the field. Jackson, whose quick eye had seen the danger, had already called up the "Stonewall brigade," which had been held in reserve. Now he detached Branch's brigade from Hill's division, and united it with his old command. Placing himself at the head of these troops, he hurled them at the enemy in a fierce and determined charge. The men rushed forward, shouting, "Stonewall Jackson! Stonewall Jackson!" "The presence of Jackson, leading them in person, seemed to produce an indescribable influence on the troops, and, as he rode to and fro, amid the smoke, encouraging the men, they greeted him with resounding cheers. This was one of the few occasions when he is reported to have been mastered by excitement. He had forgotten apparently that he commanded the whole field, and imagined himself a simple colonel leading his regiment. Everywhere, in the thickest of the fire, his form was seen and his voice heard, and his exertions to rally the men were crowned with success. The Federal advance was checked, the repulsed troops re-formed."* The enemy were brought to a halt, and then driven back into the woods, the battle continuing to rage with great stubbornness between the two brigades just named and the enemy. Pender's and Archer's brigades now came up, and a general charge was made on the left and in the centre, which drove the enemy back over the valley and into the woods

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 261.

beyond. At the same time a charge of the Federal cavalry was repulsed by Taliaferro's and Branch's brigades.

Up to this time Ewell had been prevented from advancing by the incessant fire of the Southern batteries on the left and in the centre, which swept his only approach to the enemy's position. This difficulty no longer existed, and General Ewell now threw forward his division, and drove the enemy rapidly before him.

Jackson's whole line was now advancing, driving Banks at every point. The Federals fell back rapidly, and by dark their original position was in the hands of the Confederates. Their dead and wounded were left on the field.

Jackson was anxious to reach Culpepper Court House before morning, and pressed on in pursuit. The darkness made it necessary to advance cautiously. The pursuit was soon ended, however. About a mile from the battle-field, the enemy were discovered immediately in front, in heavy force, Pope having sent fresh troops to General Banks. Jackson halted, and threw forward Field's brigade and Pegram's battery. Pegram at once opened fire, producing much disorder and confusion in the Federal line. Three batteries, well served, opened in reply, and the Southern guns were silenced and withdrawn.*

Learning from prisoners taken that reënforcements had reached Banks, General Jackson concluded to halt until the morning. The next day, the 10th, he had reason to believe that the Federal army was too strong to be attacked again. During the day this was confirmed by a reconnoissance of the cavalry under General Stuart, who had just arrived on a tour of inspection. Jackson posted his army so as to meet any attack of the enemy should they attempt to advance, and proceeded to send off his wounded to Gordonsville, bury the dead,

* General Jackson's Report. Rebellion Record. Part LVII. p. 541.

and collect the arms left on the battle-field. A rain-storm prevailed during the day.

On the 11th General Pope sent a flag of truce, requesting permission until two o'clock, to remove and bury such of his dead as had not been interred by the Confederates. The request was granted, and the time subsequently extended at the request of the Federal Commander, to five o'clock in the afternoon.

On the night of the 11th the army fell back towards the Rapidan, and returned to Gordonsville. General Jackson retreated, to avoid being attacked by a vastly superior force, and with the hope that General Pope would follow him until he could be reënforced.*

The Confederate loss in the battle was one thousand three hundred and fourteen. About one thousand five hundred stand of small arms were collected from the field. The Federal loss was about one thousand eight hundred. Jackson captured over four hundred prisoners, including Brigadier-General Prince.

The army recrossed the Rapidan on the 14th of August, and took position in the vicinity of Gordonsville.

III.

THE ADVANCE TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

The victory at Cedar Run checked for awhile the advance of General Pope. It had also another effect which neither General Lee, nor General Jackson had hoped for. It alarmed General Halleck for the safety of Pope's army, and the Federal Capital.

* Jackson's Report.

That officer could not rest easy now that Jackson was on the Rapidan, and orders were sent to General McClellan to move forward without delay from the James to Pope's assistance. Thus Pope was brought to a halt and Richmond relieved from the danger which threatened it at one blow.

General Lee had been watching the movements of the enemy with great care, and the order for McClellan's withdrawal had been scarcely received before he detected the whole plan. His opinions were confirmed by information which he received respecting the departure of Burnside's corps from Fortress Monroe. He felt sure that it was intended to suspend active operations on the James, and his sound judgment told him that he could best relieve Richmond by suddenly reënföring Jackson, and driving Pope back from the Rappahannock.*

To this end, General Longstreet, with his division, and two brigades under General Hood, was ordered to leave Richmond on the 13th of August, and proceed to Gordonsville. General Stuart was also directed to leave a sufficient force of cavalry to watch the enemy at Fredericksburg and guard the Central Railroad, and to report to General Jackson with the rest. R. H. Anderson was withdrawn from the James River, and sent after Longstreet. D. H. Hill's and McLaws' divisions, two brigades under General Walker, and Hampton's cavalry brigade were left to watch the enemy on the James.

Longstreet reached Gordonsville on the 15th, followed immediately by General Lee, himself.

After the battle of Cedar Run, General Pope took position in advance of Culpepper Court House, having been reënföred by Reno's corps of Burnside's army. His left rested on the Rapidan near Raccoon Ford; his centre was at Cedar Mountain, and his right lay on Robertson's River, a branch of the

*General Lee's Report.

Rapidan. Reno held the left, McDowell the centre, and Sigel the right, while Banks was stationed at Culpepper Court House. This was his position when General Lee reached Gordonsville.

On the 16th of August the army advanced from Gordonsville towards the Rapidan. A personal reconnoissance revealed the enemy's position to General Lee. Resolving to lose no time, Lee determined to attack Pope, and defeat him. His plan was a good one. Stuart was to move with the cavalry, cross the Rapidan at Morton's Ford, and, passing through Stevensburgh, capture Rappahannock Station (the point where the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, Pope's line of communication with Washington, crosses the Rappahannock River), burn the railroad bridge, and destroy the track and telegraph; after which he was to operate towards Culpepper Court House, and take position on Longstreet's right. Longstreet, in charge of the right wing of the army, was to pass the Rapidan at Raccoon Ford, and move on Culpepper Court House; Jackson, who held the left, was to cross at Sommerville Ford, and move in the same direction, keeping on Longstreet's left; while R. H. Anderson, with the reserve, was to follow Jackson. This would bring the army directly upon Pope's left flank, and, with his communications cut, it was believed that he would meet with a severe defeat. The movements were to commence on the 18th, but were delayed until the 20th of August.

Before they could be executed General Pope became alarmed for his safety, and—it is almost incredible, but it is true—retreated behind the Rappahannock. Yes, the man who knew no such thing as a line of retreat absolutely found one, and showed his back to his enemy. General Lee had not been obliging enough to allow Pope to perform the little feat of “lying off his flanks” upon which the Federal general had set

his heart, and with a description of which he had delighted the Congressional Committee.*

Pope fell back on the 18th and 19th of August. It was a wise measure on his part, but it finally brought to him that "disaster and shame," which he had pictured to his army as lurking in the rear. His new position behind the Rappahannock was well chosen. His left was at Kelley's Ford, and his right three miles above Rappahannock Station.

"General Longstreet crossed the Rapidan at Raccoon Ford, and, preceded by Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry brigade, arrived early in the afternoon near Kelley's Ford, on the Rappahannock, where Lee had a sharp and successful skirmish with the rear-guard of the enemy, who held the north side of the river in strong force. Jackson passed the Rapidan at Sommerville Ford, and moved toward Brandy Station. Robertson's (Federal) brigade of cavalry was encountered, which was gallantly attacked and driven across the Rappahannock by Robertson's (Confederate) command. General Jackson halted for the night near Stevensburgh, and on the morning of the 21st, moved upon Beverley's Ford on the Rappahannock. The 5th Virginia Cavalry, under Colonel Rosser, was sent forward by General Stuart to seize the north bank of the river at this point, and gallantly accomplished the object, capturing a number of prisoners and arms. General Stuart subsequently arrived, and, being furnished by General Jackson with a section of artillery, maintained his position for several hours, skirmishing warmly with the enemy. General Robertson, who had crossed the river above Beverley's Ford, reported that the enemy was advancing in large force upon the position held by General Stuart; and, as it had been determined in the meantime not to attempt the passage of the river with the army at that point, that officer withdrew to the south side. The enemy soon afterward ap-

* Report on the Conduct of the War. Vol. I. p. 278.

peared in great strength on the opposite bank, and an animated fire was kept up during the rest of the day between his artillery and the batteries attached to Jackson's leading division, under Brigadier-General Taliaferro." *

The position held by the Federal army commanded the south bank of the river, which was held by General Lee, and the fords were so strongly guarded that it was impossible to force a crossing without incurring heavy loss. General Lee, therefore, resolved to seek a more favorable crossing place higher up the stream. General Longstreet was ordered to take position on the 21st of August, in the vicinity of the Railroad bridge and Beverley's Ford, in order to mask the movements of General Jackson, who was directed to ascend the river. Jackson moved off on the morning of the 22d, leaving Trimble's brigade near Freeman's Ford, to protect his trains. In the afternoon Longstreet sent Hood with his own and Whiting's brigade under Colonel Law to relieve Trimble. Just as Hood joined Trimble, the enemy crossed a considerable force at Freeman's Ford, and attacked them. A short, but severe engagement ensued, resulting in the Federals being driven back over the river with heavy loss.

General Jackson reached Warrenton Springs on the old stage road from Warrenton to Culpepper Court House, in the afternoon. He found the bridge over the river at this point destroyed, and the crossing guarded by a very slight force. He at once determined to secure such a valuable position. The 13th Georgia, and the batteries of Brown and Dement, and afterwards Early's brigade, were thrown across the river. The enemy's force was small and made but a slight resistance, and the Springs were soon in Jackson's possession.

Just as this was effected, a heavy rain storm set in, and the river began to rise rapidly. Soon the fords were submerged,

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*General Lee's Report.

and Early was completely cut off from the southern bank. His situation was dangerous in the extreme, for the enemy, taking advantage of the rise in the river, which destroyed the fords in front of Longstreet's position, withdrew from the points lower down, and concentrated their main force in front of the Springs. Upon reconnoitering his position Early found the enemy in force in his front and on both of his flanks. He informed General Jackson of this, and asked for assistance, but, as it was impossible to send more men over the river, Jackson ordered him to hold his ground to the last, and at once set about constructing a temporary bridge over the swollen stream. Thus the 23d passed away, and by dawn of the 24th the bridge was completed, and Early was withdrawn to the south bank. He had hardly passed the river, when the enemy opened furiously on the Confederates with their artillery.

On the 23d, General Longstreet opened with his artillery on a body of the enemy that had crossed to the south bank of the stream, near the railroad bridge, after the withdrawal of General Jackson from that point. A sharp cannonade of several hours forced them to recross the river. Longstreet then shelled their position on the north bank, and drove them from it. In retiring they burned the railroad bridge and the neighboring dwellings.

The enemy having withdrawn towards Warrenton Springs, Longstreet was ordered to Jackson's support, and, overcoming the obstacles to his march presented by the swollen tributaries of the Rappahannock, reached Jeffersonton, just opposite the Springs, in the afternoon.

In the meantime General Stuart had asked and received permission to make a dash upon the enemy's rear, and cut their communications with Washington. Leaving his position at Freeman's Ford, with fifteen hundred men and two pieces of artillery, at ten o'clock on the morning of the 22nd of August, he crossed

the Rappahannock at Waterloo and Hart's Mill, and took the direct road to Warrenton. Reaching that place in the afternoon, he halted to close up and obtain information. No force of the enemy had been at the town for several days, and General Stuart learned that the road was clear to Catlett's Station, in the rear of Cedar Creek. He determined to move on that point with the intention of destroying the railroad bridge over the creek, and cutting the telegraph line. He had not proceeded far before his march was rendered difficult by a severe rain storm — the same that placed Early in such danger. Pushing on, however, he reached the little village of Auburn, in the vicinity of Catlett's Station, at dark. The enemy's picket at this point was captured and the command soon rode into the midst of a large Federal camp. The night was intensely dark, and the rain was falling, so that it was almost impossible to distinguish anything.

Fortunately, at this moment, a negro man was captured and brought before General Stuart. He had known the General previous to the war, and, at once recognizing him, informed him that he was in the immediate vicinity of General Pope's headquarters, and offered to guide him to the spot. Stuart accepted the offer, and in a few minutes Fitzhugh Lee's regiment dashed in among Pope's staff tents, taking the occupants completely by surprise, capturing a number of prisoners, mostly officers, and securing General Pope's private baggage and horses, and property to a large amount. The most valuable capture of all, however, was the *dispatch book* of the Federal commander, which contained copies of all his official correspondence with his Government.

While this was being done Rosser's and Brien's regiments were sent to attack another camp beyond the railroad, and destroy the road. They moved off in the darkness and heavy rain, but, as soon as the first shot was fired the enemy ex-

tinguished every light in their camp and took refuge in their wagons. Under these circumstances the cavalry desisted from the attack, and turned their attention to the railroad.

An effort was now made by a party under Captain Blackford to destroy the bridge, but it was found to be so thoroughly saturated with water that it would not burn. Axes were brought up, and an additional force under General Fitz Lee sent to cut the bridge down, but the stream was too high for the men to get at much of it. Besides this, the structure was too strongly built to be destroyed in this manner, and the enemy were collecting on the opposite bank of the creek, and firing on Stuart's men. It was found to be impossible to destroy the bridge, and the cavalry were withdrawn.

General Stuart knew that the rain would raise the streams in his rear, and that there was danger of his being cut off in this way. In order to prevent this it was necessary to return at once, and the cavalry commenced before daylight to retrace their steps by the same route they had come. The march was continued without halting, and they arrived safely at Warrenton Springs on the 23rd of August, in time to cross the Rapahannock by the bridge Jackson had constructed for Early.

Stuart's loss was slight. He captured over three hundred prisoners, of whom a large number were officers — some being members of General Pope's staff.

IV.

JACKSON'S FLANK MARCH.

The captured dispatch-book of General Pope was fully worth the expedition of General Stuart. It was at once forwarded to General Lee. It revealed to him that General Pope had

informed the Federal Government that he feared he would be unable to hold the line of the Rappahannock, and that he had called for reënforcements. Moreover it furnished General Lee with an accurate description of the strength and position of the Federal army, and the designs and wishes of General Pope. It contained also the information that McClellan had left West-over, that a part of his army was *en route* to join Pope, that the remainder was following as rapidly as possible, and that the army of General Cox was being withdrawn from the Kanawha Valley for the same purpose. If all these troops should join him, Pope would have an army of nearly two hundred thousand men. The entire army of Northern Virginia was not more than seventy thousand strong, and if anything was to be attempted against Pope, it would have to be done at once.

General Lee had already ordered a part of D. H. Hill's division from Richmond, and, now that he was assured of the withdrawal of McClellan, he directed the remainder of the force on the James, consisting of the rest of D. H. Hill's command, McLaws' division, Walker's two brigades, and Hampton's cavalry, to join him at once on the Rappahannock.

The situation of his army was critical, and General Lee resolved upon a bold and hazardous plan of operations, but one which was justified by the condition of affairs, and the fact that it promised a speedy defeat of Pope's army. Jackson was ordered to cross the river above Pope's right, move around that flank, gain his rear, and cut his communications with Washington. Longstreet, during this movement, was to engage Pope's attention by threatening him in front, and as soon as Jackson had gotten sufficiently advanced in his march, was to follow him. Thus, by planting his whole army on Pope's line of communication, General Lee hoped to force him back from the Rappahannock, and compel him to fight before all of his reënforcements could join him.

Jackson began his march from Warrenton Springs, on Monday morning, August 25th. Ascending the south bank of the Rappahannock, he crossed the river at Hinson's Ford, dragging his artillery with great difficulty over the rugged and narrow road. Pushing on right under the shadow of the Blue Ridge, across open fields, and along roads seldom used, he moved in the most direct line for Thoroughfare Gap, where the Manassas Gap Railroad passes through the Bull Run Mountains. This pass must be reached before the enemy could hear of his movements and occupy it. The day was intensely hot, but the men were not allowed to halt for food or rest. Moving through Orleans, in Fauquier County, the corps reached Salem at midnight, after a forced march of thirty-five miles. Jackson seems to have infused his own indomitable energy into his men, for at the end of their fatiguing tramp, though hungry and footsore, they were still anxious to press on, and the march had been made without stragglers. The troops bivouacked at Salem for the night.

All along the route the people had gazed at them with wonder and joy. They had not seen the gray-jackets in that region for many weary months, and eager questions were put to the men as to where they had come from and where they were going. To all a short refusal to reply was given as the corps hurried on.

During the day General Stuart had been moving on Jackson's right, disposing his cavalry so as to prevent the enemy from gaining any information of the flank march of the Second Corps. He continued to perform this duty until the object of the march was attained.

At daybreak on the 26th of August, the troops were again under arms. Wheeling to the right, Jackson moved direct to Thoroughfare Gap, which, to his joy, he found unoccupied by the enemy. Passing through Gainesville, he reached Bristoe

Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, at sunset. At Gainesville General Stuart joined the column, and took position on the right flank.

As the corps reached the railroad, the sound of cars, coming from the direction of Warrenton Junction, was heard, and General Ewell at once divided his force to take simultaneous possession of two points of the railroad. A train heavily loaded dashed by at full speed. It was fired into by the 2nd Virginia Cavalry, but succeeded in reaching Manassas in safety. Other trains were now heard approaching, and Ewell proceeded to obstruct the track with logs. This resulted in the capture of two trains, one of which was thrown from the track. Others were still heard coming, but the alarm had been given, and they hesitated. "The trains in the direction of Warrenton uttered shrill screams, which experts declared to signify, 'Is all right?'" One of these railroad experts, named Foreman, jumped on the prostrate engine, turned a portion of the machinery, and signalled back, 'All right, come on,' — General Fitz Lee drawing up his cavalry to fire upon them as they drew near. But the alarm had been given; the trains would not run the perilous gauntlet."*

The first part of General Lee's plan had been successfully accomplished. Jackson was now fairly in Pope's rear, and in possession of his line of supply.

When he reached Bristoe Station, General Jackson learned that the enemy had established their principal depot of supplies and had collected an immense quantity of stores at Manassas Junction, eight miles distant. The capture of this point was therefore a necessity, and upon making known his desire to secure it, he was met by an offer from Brigadier-General Trimble to undertake the task. The offer was accepted, and, notwithstanding the march of thirty miles which had been made

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 279.

since dawn, and the darkness of the night, Trimble was at once dispatched to Manassas. In order to increase the prospect of success, General Stuart was soon afterwards ordered to follow Trimble with a part of the cavalry, and, as the ranking officer, to take command of the expedition.*

Stuart pushed ahead of the infantry with his cavalry, until fired on with canister from the works at Manassas, when, finding it impossible to use his troopers in the darkness, he sent for the infantry, and after a short struggle captured the place with its small garrison.†

The amount of property captured at Manassas was very large. The articles were as follows:—eight pieces of artillery; seventy-two horses and equipments; three hundred prisoners; two hundred negroes; two hundred new tents; one hundred and seventy-five extra horses; ten locomotives; two railroad trains loaded with stores worth several millions of dollars; fifty thousand pounds of bacon; one thousand barrels of beef; twenty thousand barrels of pork; several thousand barrels of flour, and a large supply of forage. In addition to all this were a bakery capable of preparing fifteen thousand loaves of bread daily, and a number of sutler's establishments well supplied.

These captures were a rich harvest to Jackson's hungry men when they arrived the next day. The troops were marched up and told to help themselves, which they did with a will. An eye-witness writes, " 'Twas a curious sight to see our ragged and famished men helping themselves to every imaginable article of luxury or necessity, whether of clothing, food, or what not. For my part I got a tooth brush, a box of candles, a quantity of lobster salad, a barrel of coffee, and other things which I forget. The scene utterly beggared description. Our

* General Jackson's Report.

† General Stuart's Report.

men had been living on roasted corn since crossing the Rappahannock, and we had brought no wagons, so that we could carry little away of the riches before us. But the men could eat one meal at least. So they were marched up, and as much of everything eatable served out as they could carry. To see a starving man eating lobster salad and drinking Rhine wine, barefooted and in tatters, was curious; the whole thing was indescribable." *

On the morning of the 27th General Jackson moved with all his troops, save Ewell's division, to Manassas. Ewell was left at Bristoe Station with orders to endeavor to hinder the march of the enemy should they commence to retire from the Rappahannock, but, if hard pressed, himself, to fall back and rejoin the main army at Manassas.

When the Federal authorities at Washington heard of the capture of Manassas, they supposed it had been effected by a mere raiding party of the Confederates, and on the morning of the 27th a New Jersey brigade, under General Taylor, was sent to recover the place. General Taylor made his attack about midday, with great gallantry, but was routed with slaughter, being himself mortally wounded.

.V.

WHAT POPE FOUND IN HIS REAR.

The march of General Jackson had been rapid and secret, but it had not escaped the observation of the Federal commander. An officer of General Banks' staff (Col. J. S. Clark,) chanced to be near Jackson's line of march during the first day. He held his position at great personal risk until the corps

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 280.

passed by, counting the regiments and batteries, and noticing the movements of the cavalry.* He immediately communicated this information to General Pope. The Federal commander, however, failed to make any use of this knowledge, which reached him in time to afford him an opportunity to occupy Thoroughfare Gap in force, and baffle Jackson's whole movement. The mysterious march of the great flanker seems to have completely bewildered General Pope, who at one time was under the impression that the Confederates were retreating to the mountains. He struck out blindly in a series of ridiculous manœuvres on the Rappahannock, the necessity for, or meaning of which, it is difficult to understand. He was recalled to his senses, however, on the night of the 26th, when he learned that Jackson had seized the railroad at Manassas, planted himself in his rear, and threatened to cut him off from Washington.

Pope's army was now very strong. He had been reënforced by Reynold's division, and Porter's, and Heintzleman's corps of the Army of the Potomac, and the remainder of that force (the corps of Sumner and Franklin) was moving from Alexandria to join him. His army was therefore not less than one hundred and twenty thousand strong, exclusive of the two corps yet on their way to him, and it was in his power to hurl this command upon the single corps of Jackson. He saw the opportunity thus offered, and made his dispositions to seize it with more skill and vigor than he ever exhibited at any previous or subsequent period of the campaign.

Jackson and Longstreet being yet separated, Pope's true policy was to move to his left, and seize the road leading from Thoroughfare Gap to the position held by Jackson. This would compel Longstreet to fight for his junction with Jackson, and while he was thus held at bay, Pope could fall on the great

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 178.

flanker, with the rest of his army, and destroy him. General Pope was quick to appreciate this, and at once threw forward McDowell's corps, followed by that of Sigel and Reynolds' division, towards Gainesville. Should he succeed in occupying Gainesville, and there was then nothing to prevent it, he would place forty thousand of his best troops between Longstreet and Manassas. Reno's corps and Kearney's division of Heintzelman's corps, were directed to move upon Greenwich, to support McDowell, while, with Hooker's division, Pope marched direct upon Manassas, along the railroad. Porter's corps was at Warrenton Junction. This was to be relieved by Banks' corps, which was to remain at the Junction to cover the trains, and repair the railroad. Porter, as soon as relieved, was to hasten to Gainesville. No better plan could have been selected, and this one promised the most brilliant success.

McDowell's column occupied Gainesville on the night of the 27th, and at the same time Reno and Kearney reached Greenwich. On the afternoon of the same day Hooker attacked General Ewell at Bristoe Station. His first attack was repulsed, but he brought up fresh troops, and pressed Ewell so heavily that the latter, in obedience to the orders he had received from General Jackson, fell back in good order, across Broad Run, checking every attempt at pursuit, and burning the railroad bridge over the stream. That night he rejoined General Jackson at Manassas. His stout resistance in the afternoon induced General Pope to believe that the battle would be renewed the next morning, and Porter's corps was diverted from its march to Gainesville, and ordered to join Hooker at Bristoe Station that night.

Jackson's situation was critical. The main body of Pope's army, at least seventy thousand strong, was at Gainesville and Greenwich between himself and Longstreet, and with the remainder Pope was advancing directly upon him. The cav-

alry had been employed all day in ascertaining the movements of the enemy, and every report brought in to General Jackson informed him of an increase of his danger. On the night of the 27th, his resolution was taken. It was necessary to retire from Manassas — but in what direction?

Two courses were open to him. One was to march rapidly by way of Aldie, and, passing around Bull Run Mountain, unite his column with that of Longstreet. This could have been accomplished in safety, but it would have destroyed Lee's whole plan of operations, for it would have relinquished Pope's communications and put an end to all hope of forcing him to a general engagement upon the ground chosen by General Lee, who wished to compel Pope to fight while deprived of his supplies and cut off from his reënforcements.

The other course was full of danger, but it promised to the great soldier who adopted it, the complete success of the whole plan of the campaign. It was to withdraw towards Bull Run, and occupy a position nearer to Thoroughfare Gap. It was certain that he would have to fight hard to maintain this position, but it would bring him within supporting distance of General Longstreet, and, if the worst came to the worst, he could still retreat behind the mountains by way of Aldie.

That night the immense masses of stores taken at Manassas, were committed to the flames, and by the lurid glare of the fire, the troops took up the march toward Bull Run.

It was a great sacrifice for the hungry men to refrain from trying to carry off the food which had fallen into their hands. But to attempt to remove more than one meal would have been to encumber themselves too heavily, and this would have retarded their subsequent movements, as was so terribly shown at a later period of the war. Therefore they applied the torch to the food they needed so much, and, still gay and cheerful, moved off in the darkness to meet new privations. Their patri-

otism was richly rewarded. The destruction of the stores at Manassas was a crushing blow to General Pope. That officer, in his report of the campaign, says :

“ Our men, much worn down by hard service and continuous fighting for many previous days, and very short of provisions, rested on their guns. Our horses had had no forage for two days. I had telegraphed and written urgently for forage and rations to be sent us ; but, on Saturday morning, before the action was resumed, I received a letter from General Franklin, written the day before, at Alexandria, stating that he had been directed by General McClellan to inform me that rations and forage for my command would be loaded into the cars and available wagons as soon as I could send a cavalry escort to Alexandria to bring them up. All hope of being able to maintain my position, whether victorious or not, vanished with this letter. My cavalry was utterly broken down by long and constant service in the face of the enemy, and, bad as they were, could not be spared from the front. * * I at once understood that we must, if possible, finish what we had to do that day, as night must see us behind Bull Run if we wished to save men and animals from starvation.”*

After destroying the stores, Jackson set off for his new position. In order to deceive the enemy, A. P. Hill's division, with a part of the cavalry, was sent towards Centreville. Hill crossed Bull Run at Blackburn's Ford, but upon reaching Centreville, wheeled to the left, and, following the Warrenton road,

* *General Pope's Report.* — I have quoted this to show that the loss of his stores was a severe blow to Pope. The apology for his defeat made in this extract is not valid. The Confederates suffered more than the Federals from loss of food, but they conquered in spite of this. Moreover, the letter of General Franklin was received the day of the great battle of the 30th, when it was impossible for supplies to reach Pope. Fitz Lee's cavalry had been so disposed as to cut off such a train. Even had the train succeeded in getting through, it could not have reached Pope before his defeat.

moved back towards Bull Run, which he recrossed at the Stone Bridge, and rejoined General Jackson, who, with the rest of the corps, had taken position on the old battle-field of July 21, 1861, with his right at a point a little above the village of Groveton, and his left resting near Sudley Ford. His line was formed on the north side of the turnpike, and was partially protected by an excavation which had been made for a projected railroad. Thus Jackson had neutralized the excellent dispositions of General Pope, and had placed himself directly in communication with General Lee, in spite of the force at Gainesville. He had also secured a strong position, with a clear and open line of retreat, in case of disaster. This line was formed on the afternoon of the 28th of August.

In the meantime, General Pope had been completely deceived by Ewell's resistance at Bristoe Station, and, as has been seen, had ordered Porter to join him there. He was under the impression that Jackson intended making a stand at Manassas, and that Ewell would renew the battle at Bristoe the next morning,—the twenty-eighth. This was exactly what General Pope wanted, and what General Jackson, who was too much of a soldier to be caught in such a trap, did not intend to permit. Pope, confident of crushing Jackson, ordered McDowell's and Reno's columns on the night of the 27th, to move from Gainesville and Greenwich on Manassas, exultantly informing General McDowell, "If you will march promptly and rapidly at the earliest dawn, upon Manassas Junction, we shall bag the whole crowd."

Early on the morning of the 28th, General Pope moved forward with the divisions of Hooker, Kearney, and Reno, and to his surprise found that Ewell had withdrawn during the night. With these divisions, followed closely by Porter's corps, he pushed on towards Manassas Junction, still thinking that Jackson awaited him there. Manassas was reached at

noon, and, to his dismay, he found that Jackson had disappeared. General Pope now saw that he had committed an error by withdrawing McDowell from Gainesville, by which he had left the road open for the arrival of Lee with Longstreet's corps, without inflicting any injury upon the Confederates.

He endeavored to regain the advantage he had lost by this blunder, by recalling McDowell from his movement on Manassas, and directing him to gain the Warrenton turnpike, and march upon Centreville, while he, with the rest of the army, hurried on towards Centreville in pursuit of A. P. Hill, whose division he supposed to be Jackson's main body. By these movements he hoped still to be able to crush Jackson before the arrival of Lee. He had lost too much time to accomplish much, and it was late in the afternoon before McDowell succeeded in regaining the turnpike with but one division (King's) of his whole corps.

The truth is Jackson had so completely mystified and deceived General Pope, that the latter did not know where the Confederates were.* This is conclusively proved by the manner in which the engagement which followed was brought on.

Late in the afternoon McDowell, with King's division, arrived in the neighborhood of Groveton, in utter ignorance of the presence of Jackson. The approach of this force was reported to General Jackson by General Stuart, and a part of the cavalry, under Colonel Bradley Johnson, was thrown forward to annoy the Federals in their advance. Supposing that the enemy would try to break through by the turnpike, General Jackson made his dispositions to receive them, and moved his command through the woods, leaving Grovetown on the left until he reached a commanding position near Brawner's House.

* On the 29th, (the next day) General Fitz John Porter telegraphed to General Burnside, "I expect they (the Confederates) know what they are doing, which is more than any one here, or anywhere, knows."

McDowell, still ignorant of Jackson's presence, continued his march, and unconsciously exposed his flank to the latter, who, seeing his advantage, fell upon it with Jackson's division, under General Taliaferro and Ewell's division.

The Federals stood their ground well, and the engagement was severe. Towards dark the enemy were heavily reënforced, but made no effort to advance. They held their position with "obstinate determination" until nine o'clock at night, when they slowly yielded the field to the Confederates, and, during the night, withdrew to the neighborhood of Manassas Junction. The losses on both sides were heavy. Among the Confederate wounded were Generals Taliaferro and Ewell, the latter of whom lost a leg.* Ewell was the ablest subordinate in the whole corps, and his loss to it at this time, was a heavy blow.

General Pope had found Jackson at last, and was also about to find the "disaster and shame" which lurked in his rear. He had commenced his movements with a display of good generalship, but Jackson had baffled all his plans, and now stood confronting him in the position Pope had tried to prevent him from reaching.

VI.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF MANASSAS.

Meanwhile Longstreet had been moving rapidly to join General Jackson. On the afternoon of the 26th he crossed the Rappahannock at Hinson's Ford, and encamped for the night near Orleans. The next night he reached White Plains, his march having been retarded by certain demonstrations of the enemy's cavalry, from the direction of Warrenton, which

* Jackson's Report.

seemed to menace his right. As he had no cavalry with which to ascertain the meaning of these movements, General Longstreet was obliged to advance with caution. On the morning of the 28th the march was resumed towards Thoroughfare Gap, which was reached in the afternoon.

This pass is a position of great natural strength, and, at the time of General Longstreet's arrival, was held by the division of General Ricketts, which had been left to guard it after the withdrawal of McDowell's column from Gainesville. D. R. Jones' division was advanced to drive in the enemy's skirmishers, and force the passage of the mountain. The skirmishers were driven back, and the enemy were discovered holding the eastern side in heavy force. As Jones approached they opened with their artillery, sweeping the only road through the gorge and the sides of the mountain. It was impossible to use artillery upon the ground held by Jones, and General Longstreet determined to turn the enemy's position. Hood, with two brigades, and Wilcox with three, were ordered to turn the Federal right; the former, by a narrow footpath leading over the mountains to the left of the pass, and the latter, by Hopewell Gap, about three miles to the north.

Before these manœuvres could be executed, the enemy advanced and attacked Jones' left, under Brigadier-General G. T. Anderson. They were driven back with spirit, when they retired to the east side of the pass, and, just before night, retreated, leaving the road open. Ricketts fell back to Manassas, and Longstreet's command bivouacked for the night, east of the mountain.*

Early on the morning of the 29th the march was resumed, and the advanced division reached General Jackson's position

* Reports of Generals Lee and Longstreet.

about ten o'clock, almost the entire corps being in line by four o'clock.*

On the morning of the 29th of August, General Jackson prepared once more to receive the attack of the enemy. His troops were formed along the cut of an unfinished railroad, his right being on the Warrenton turnpike and his left resting near Sudley Ford. His old division, under General Starke, was on the right, Ewell's division, under General Lawton, in the cen-

* General Pope states that Longstreet did not join Jackson until sunset, declaring that at five o'clock in the afternoon, General Porter, who was ordered to prevent the junction of Jackson and Longstreet, "had in his front no considerable body of the enemy." He adds, in trying to shift the odium of his defeat from himself to General Porter. "I believed then, as I am very sure now, that it was easily practicable for him to have turned the right flank of Jackson, and to have fallen upon his rear; that if he had done so we should have gained a decisive victory over the army under Jackson before he could have been joined by any of the forces of Longstreet." This assertion is simply untrue, as I shall proceed to show. General Longstreet states that his column resumed its march *from* Thoroughfare Gap "*early on the 29th.*" He adds, "The noise of battle was heard before we reached Gainesville. The march was quickened to the extent of our capacity. The excitement of battle seemed to give new life and strength to our jaded men, and the head of my column *soon reached a position in rear of the enemy's left flank.*" D. R. Jones, who held the extreme right of Longstreet's line after his junction with Jackson, says, "Early on the morning of the 29th, I took up the line of march in the direction of the old battle-ground of Manassas, whence heavy firing was heard; *arriving on the ground about noon*, my command was stationed on the extreme right of our whole line." General Hood says, "*Early in the day* we came up with the main body of the enemy on the plains of Manassas." He states that he was in position when the enemy made their attack upon Jackson "about four o'clock in the afternoon." These statements were made before the writers had seen General Pope's report, and without reference to it. The distance from Thoroughfare Gap to Groveton is not very great, and as the troops began the march early in the morning, and were pushed forward at their utmost speed, it would have been very strange if they had not reached Jackson's position before Porter arrived from Manassas Junction. I have thus established the time of Longstreet's arrival. Farther on I shall show that it was impossible for Porter to turn Jackson's right flank at any time after noon on the 29th.

tre, and A. P. Hill on the left. The men were weary and worn out with their constant marching and fighting, and with hunger. Still they were cheerful and firm. General Jackson himself was no longer anxious for his safety. Towards morning he had received a message from General Lee, announcing the passage of Thoroughfare Gap, and the approach of the rest of the army. The danger was over. The skill of Jackson and the heroism of his men had crowned the brilliant conception of General Lee with success. Pope's next blow would have to be struck at the whole army of Northern Virginia.

The engagement of the previous evening had acquainted General Pope with Jackson's position. He seems to have been under the impression that Jackson was trying to retreat, for on the morning of the 29th he ordered General Sigel, who, with his corps and Reynolds' division was near Groveton, to attack the Confederate line, for the purpose of "*bringing Jackson to stand, if it were possible to do so.*" At the same time Reno's corps and the divisions of Hooker and Kearney under Heintzelman were ordered back from Centreville, whither they had gone in their fruitless pursuit on the 28th, while Porter, with his corps, and King's division of McDowell's corps, was directed to march upon Gainesville.

About ten o'clock in the morning General Sigel opened his attack with his artillery — about the same time that General Longstreet's troops commenced to arrive. Jackson's batteries replied with spirit. This cannonade continued for some time after twelve o'clock, when Sigel was joined by General Pope with Reno's and Heintzelman's corps.

By this time General Longstreet had arrived. He at once formed his line with Hood's division on his left. Hood was deployed on the right and left of the Warrenton turnpike, at right angles with it, and General D. R. Jones was posted on the extreme right of the line, his division being drawn up on

the Manassas Gap Railroad, and in echelon with regard to the three last brigades.*

This was the position of the Southern army when General Pope reached the field. He was, however, but poorly informed of Jackson's position, and was in total ignorance of Longstreet's presence, supposing that he was still on the march.

The Federal line was formed as follows. Heintzelman's corps, consisting of the divisions of Hooker and Kearney, was on the right, in front and west of the Sudley Springs road; Reno and Sigel were in the centre, extending a point a short distance south of the Warrenton road; and Reynolds' division was on the left. General Pope was in total ignorance of the whereabouts of Porter and McDowell and was still under the impression that he had only Jackson's corps to deal with.†

At three o'clock Pope ordered General Hooker to attack Jackson's left. Hooker, who had a better conception of the task before him than his commander possessed, remonstrated, but General Pope repeated the command, and Hooker made his attack with his usual vigor. The Federals advanced gallantly in the face of a heavy fire from Hill's division, and succeeded in breaking his line, and getting possession of a portion of the railroad cut, and for a short time Gregg's brigade, on the extreme left, was completely isolated from the main body of the command. The 14th South Carolina and the 49th Georgia, under General McGowan, were at once thrown forward to recover the lost ground. The enemy resisted stubbornly, but were at last driven back to their main body, the opposing forces frequently delivering their fire at ten paces. Kearney's division was advanced to Hooker's support, but this was also repulsed. The enemy made assault after assault, but were driven back each time with heavy slaughter by Hill's troops.

* General Longstreet's Report.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 184.

By this time General Pope had learned the location of Porter's command, which was between Manassas and Gainesville. About half past four o'clock he ordered Porter to turn the Confederate right, and attack their rear, still thinking that Jackson's right was that of the entire Confederate line. Porter did not receive this order until about dusk. He had endeavored in the morning to execute Pope's order to re-occupy Gainesville, but had found his progress barred by Longstreet's corps. The same obstacle now prevented him from turning Jackson's right, so that in spite of General Pope's assertion that his defeat was due to Porter's failure to perform this movement, the reader will see that Porter never had an opportunity of attacking Jackson before Longstreet's arrival. Consequently, as Longstreet covered Porter's entire front, the latter was compelled to make his attack on Longstreet's front instead of on Jackson's flank. The result was that he was met with determination, and quickly driven back with the loss of one piece of artillery.

About six o'clock, when he thought Porter was coming into action, Pope made a furious assault on Jackson's left, with the corps of Heintzelman and Reno. The attack was made just as the troops on the left had fired almost all their ammunition. The movement was successful. The left of Hill was driven back on his centre, and the enemy pressed on with loud shouts. Hill's men did not give way without a severe struggle, however, and when their ammunition was exhausted they fought with rocks from the railroad cut — "and it is well established that many of the enemy were killed by having their skulls broken with fragments of rock." *

Early's brigade and the 8th Louisiana regiment, followed by the 13th Georgia, regained the lost ground, and drove the enemy across the railroad and back on their main line. Early's

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 293.

pursuit was so determined that General Jackson recalled him lest he should bring on a general engagement, which it was desired to postpone until the next day.

General Hood was now ordered by General Longstreet to advance, and attack the enemy's left, for the purpose of relieving the pressure upon Jackson. Before he could comply with the order, Hood was himself attacked by Porter. Hood was reënforced, and the enemy driven back with heavy loss.

The Federals retreated at all points, pressed by the Confederates, until nine o'clock, when the former occupied a strong position which they held with a large force, and the Confederates drew back to their original line. The losses on both sides were severe. Generals Field and Trimble, and Colonel Forno, commanding Hays' brigade, were severely wounded. The enemy acknowledged a loss of eight thousand men.

During the night the Army of Northern Virginia bivouacked on the ground it had held during the day. Its withdrawal to this position, immediately after the close of the fight, caused General Pope to think that his adversary was retreating, and he telegraphed to Washington that Lee was flying to the mountains. He was soon undeceived, however.

Had General Pope followed the dictates of prudence, he would have retreated within the lines of Washington at once. He had already suffered a loss of seventeen thousand men, and the firmness of his troops was considerably shaken by their reverses, as well as by the arduous service to which they had been subjected, and hunger — though as regarded fatigue and hunger the two armies were about on an equality. In spite of this, he resolved to risk one more battle.

Saturday, the 30th of August, was a clear, sunny day, and with the first ray of sunlight the two armies were in readiness. General Lee held the same position he had occupied on the previous day — his left near Sudley Ford, his centre at Grove-

ton, and his right on the Manassas Gap Railroad. The centre was held by thirty-two pieces of artillery, under Colonel Stephen D. Lee, posted on a commanding elevation. Longstreet's line stretched away obliquely from Jackson's, forming with it an angle of nearly forty-five degrees, and causing the Southern line to assume almost the form of the letter V. The artillery was disposed so as to resist the assaults of the enemy, and support the advance of the Confederates. The cavalry was posted on both flanks. The whole army was present, with the exception of R. H. Anderson's division, which arrived during the forenoon and was held in reserve.

The Federal line conformed to that of General Lee—it took the shape of a V reversed, or with the angle or centre thrown forward, and the wings drawn back. Reynolds' division held the left, Heintzelman's corps the right, and Porter, Sigel and Reno the centre.

Skirmishing began early in the morning. Pope, thinking that Lee was retreating, being deceived by the withdrawal of Jackson's corps on the night of the 30th to the position it held during the 31st, ordered McDowell to move with three corps on the Warrenton road, and “press the enemy vigorously during the whole day.”* Instead of retreating, however, General Lee was calmly awaiting Pope's attack in the position he had chosen.

About four o'clock the head of McDowell's column debouched from the woods in Jackson's front, near his right, and moved rapidly upon him. A second and a third line followed, each within supporting distance of the other. As the first line emerged from the woods, it was shattered by the simultaneous discharge of the thirty-two guns in the Confederate centre, and immediately the other batteries along Jackson's line opened. Under this murderous fire, the Federal lines wavered, and

finally broke. Fresh troops were thrown forward to support them, and the battle extended from Jackson's right along his centre and left. Pope brought up his forces rapidly, and up to this time Jackson had borne the weight of all their assaults. They pressed so heavily upon him, that, towards five o'clock, he sent to General Lee for reënforcements, and General Longstreet was ordered to advance his troops to Jackson's assistance.

Fortunately, at this time, a part of the Federal line came immediately within reach of General Longstreet's artillery. He threw forward two batteries, and opened a heavy fire on the Federals. As this was being done, he received General Lee's message to go to Jackson's assistance, but as he was sure that the best way to aid Jackson was to drive back the enemy then in front of him, Longstreet made no movement with his infantry, but continued the fire of his batteries. In a short time this portion of the enemy was put to flight.*

It was now after five o'clock, and the Federals had been so fearfully cut up in their unavailing efforts to force the Southern position, that they fell back in some confusion. Seeing this, Jackson advanced his line in pursuit, and Longstreet, anticipating General Lee's order to that effect, dashed forward with his troops against the Federal centre and left.

The whole Confederate army was now advancing, pressing the enemy back at every point, and threatening the Federal line of retreat over Bull Run. Abandoning all hope of victory, General Pope now turned his attention to bringing off his army. At nightfall his danger was increased by the capture of the heights held by Reynolds' and Ricketts' divisions, which were carried by a resistless charge of Longstreet's corps. The last position left to the Federals was now assailed, — the plateau on which the famous Henry House stood, the scene of the severest part of the battle of July 21, 1861. If the Confederates could

*General Longstreet's Report.

have carried this when they first assailed it, Pope's army would have been destroyed, as his retreat would have been cut off. The Federal commander promptly occupied the plateau with a heavy force, and hurried his defeated and disheartened troops to the rear. Towards ten o'clock at night he yielded this position, also, and retreated across Bull Run.

The Confederate pursuit ceased at this stream. The night was intensely dark, and the fords of Bull Run were uncertain. General Lee, therefore, deemed it most prudent to suspend operations until the next morning.

VII.

OX HILL.

On the morning of the 31st of August it was found that the Federal army was in position on the heights of Centreville. There Pope was joined by the corps of Franklin and Sumner, and there he remained during the day.

General Lee determined to strike one more blow at him, and on Sunday morning directed General Longstreet to remain on the battle field of the previous day, to engage the attention of the enemy, while Jackson made an attempt to turn Pope's right and intercept his retreat to Washington.

Jackson crossed Bull Run at Sudley Ford, and moved along Little River turnpike. A heavy rain fell during the day, and this, together with the exhaustion of the men, retarded his progress. At night he bivouacked near Chantilly. The next morning he continued his march in the direction of Fairfax Court House.

As soon as he was informed of this movement of Jackson, Pope fell back from Centreville towards Fairfax Court House.

On the 1st of September he took position to resist the Confederate advance, his right being at Ox Hill, near Germantown, and his left at Fairfax Court House.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, in the midst of a drenching shower, Jackson arrived before Ox Hill. He at once formed his line of battle — Hill's division on the right, Ewell's in the centre, and Jackson's on the left, — on the right of the turnpike, with his artillery posted on an eminence to the left of the road. Field's and Branche's brigades, of Hill's division, were sent forward to engage the enemy. The storm was driving directly in the faces of the men, but they pressed on with spirit. The enemy gave them a warm reception, and at one time Branch's brigade was forced back by the heavy fire in its front and flank. The rest of Hill's troops were quickly advanced, and soon a part of Ewell's division was also engaged.

The enemy stood firmly until Stevens' division of Reno's corps was beaten back with the loss of its general. General Kearney endeavored to reestablish the line, and while gallantly engaged in this attempt, rode into the Confederate lines and was killed.* The enemy then retreated from the field.

On the following day the Federal army withdrew within the lines of Washington. The campaign was over.

Longstreet rejoined Jackson on Tuesday morning, September 2d. For the first time since the capture of Manassas, rations were issued to the army. The men had subsisted for several days on green corn and unripe apples, bearing their privations not only with cheerfulness, but with gayety. Since the advance from the Rappahannock began, on the 25th of August, they had been constantly marching, or fighting the enemy. The consequence was that they were worn down. Many of

* The widow of General Kearney afterwards requested General Lee to allow her to recover the horse and sword of the gallant soldier. General Lee at once granted her request, and sent them to her under a flag of truce.

them were without shoes, and their feet had been so cut and bruised by the rocky roads over which they had passed, that now they could scarcely walk. Few armies have endured more suffering than these men experienced in this brief but brilliant campaign, and none have borne their trials with more heroic fortitude than was shown by the Army of Northern Virginia.

General Pope was compelled to abandon his wounded on the night of the 30th. The next day he sent to General Lee to request a truce until he could send ambulances for them. General Lee refused to grant the truce, but allowed him to send for his wounded.* Pope's medical officers at once set to work to remove them, but the task was executed so slowly that on the 3d of September there were still about three thousand remaining on the field.

The Confederate loss in the campaign, from the Rappahannock to the Potomac, was four thousand seven hundred and

* The following is the correspondence on this subject : —

“CENTREVILLE, Aug. 31, 1862.

“SIR: Many of the wounded of this army have been left on the field, for whom I desire to send ambulances. Will you please inform me whether you consent to a truce until they are cared for? I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN POPE, *Maj.-Gen. U. S. A. Com.*

Commanding Officer Confederate Forces near Groveton.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
August 31, 1862.

“MAJ.-GEN. JOHN POPE, *U. S. A. Comd'g, &c.*:

“SIR: Consideration for your wounded induces me to consent to your sending ambulances to convey them within your lines. I cannot consent to a truce nor a suspension of military operations of this army. If you desire to send for your wounded, should your ambulances report to Dr. Guilet, Medical Director of this army, he will give directions for their transportation.

The wounded will be paroled, and it is understood that no delay will take place in their removal.

Very respectfully your obd't serv't,

(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

twenty-five in Longstreet's corps, and four thousand three hundred and eighty-seven in Jackson's corps, making a total of nine thousand one hundred and twelve, including Generals Ewell, Taliaferro, Field, and Trimble, severely wounded.

The Federal losses were enormous. They amounted in all to over thirty thousand, including eight Generals killed, seven thousand prisoners, in addition to about two thousand wounded left in the hands of the Confederates. "Thirty pieces of artillery, upwards of twenty thousand stand of small arms, numerous colors, and a large amount of stores, besides those taken by General Jackson at Manassas Junction, were captured" by the Confederates.* It was a great and a glorious campaign, and was worthy of the illustrious soldier who conducted it.

After the retreat of Pope to Washington, General Lee sent the following letter, describing the achievements of his army, to President Davis : —

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
CHANTILLY, 3d September, 1862.

"HIS EXCELLENCY, JEFFERSON DAVIS, *President Confederate States of America* :

"MR. PRESIDENT: My letter of the 30th ult. will have informed your Excellency of the progress of this army to that date. General Longstreet's division, having arrived the day previous, was formed in order of battle on the right of General Jackson, who had been engaged with the enemy since morning, resisting an attack commenced on the 28th. The enemy, on the latter day, was vigorously repulsed, leaving his numerous dead and wounded on the field. His attack on the morning of the 29th was feeble, but became warmer in the afternoon, when he was again repulsed by both wings of the army. His loss on this day, as stated in his published report herewith enclosed, amounted to eight thousand in killed and wounded.

* General Lee's Report.

“The enemy being reënforced, renewed the attack on the afternoon of the 30th, when a general advance of both wings of the army was ordered, and after a fierce combat, which raged till after nine o’clock, he was completely defeated and driven beyond Bull Run. The darkness of the night, his destruction of the Stone Bridge after crossing, and the uncertainty of the fords, stopped the pursuit.

“The next morning the enemy was discovered in the strong position at Centreville, and the army was put in motion towards the Little River Turnpike, to turn his right. Upon reaching Ox Hill on the 1st of September, he was again discovered in our front on the heights of Germantown, and about five P. M. made a spirited attack upon the front and right of our columns, with a view of apparently covering the withdrawal of his trains on the Centreville road, and masking his retreat. Our position was maintained with but slight loss on both sides. Major-General Kearney was left by the enemy dead on the field. During the night the enemy fell back to Fairfax Court House, and abandoned his position at Centreville. Yesterday about noon, he evacuated Fairfax Court House, taking the roads, as reported to me, to Alexandria and Washington.

“I have as yet been unable to get official reports of our loss or captures in these various engagements. Many gallant officers have been killed or wounded. Of the General officers, Ewell, Trimble, Taliaferro, Field, Jenkins, and Mahone, have been reported wounded. Colonels Means, Marshall, Baylor, Neff, and Gadberry, killed. About seven thousand prisoners have already been paroled, about the same number of small arms collected from the field, and thirty pieces of cannon captured, besides a number of wagons, ambulances, &c. A large number of arms still remain on the ground. For want of transportation, valuable stores had to be destroyed as captured,

while the enemy, at their various depots, are reported to have burned many millions of property in their retreat.

* * * * *

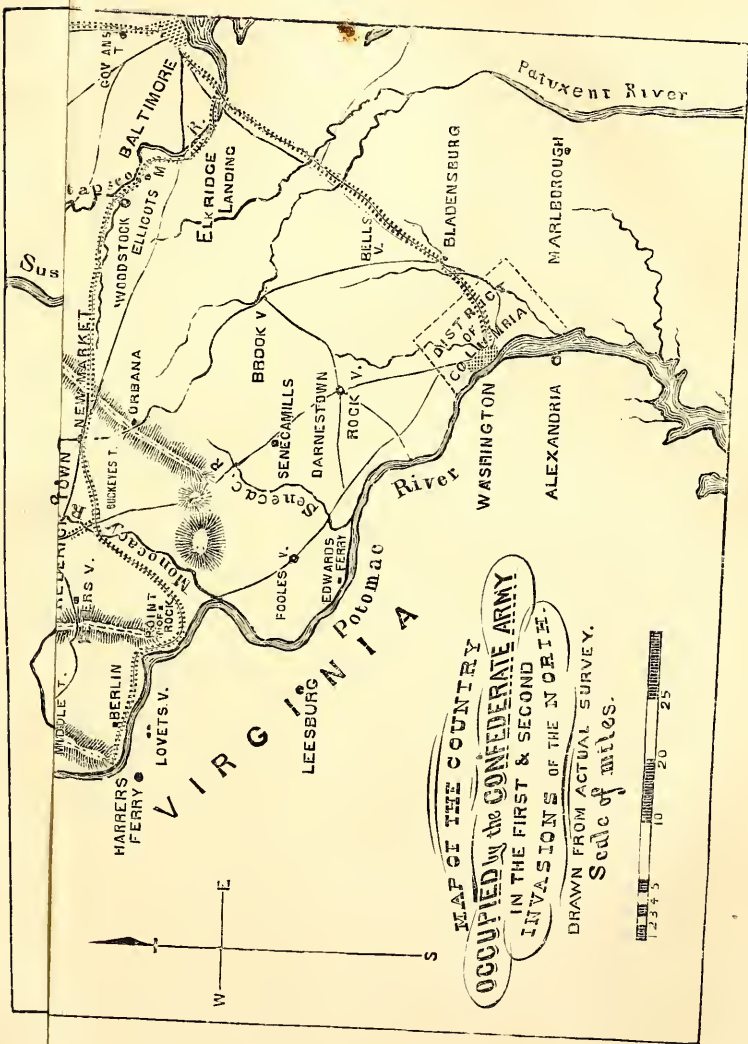
“ Nothing could surpass the gallantry and endurance of the troops, who have cheerfully borne every danger and hardship, both on the battle-field and march.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your most ob't serv't,

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

General Lee passed through the campaign unhurt, but, just as it closed, was severely injured. On the 4th of September, he was standing near his horse, when the animal, becoming frightened, dashed against him, and threw him violently to the ground. One of the bones of his left hand was broken. The accident was painful, but merely prevented him from riding on horseback for a short time.



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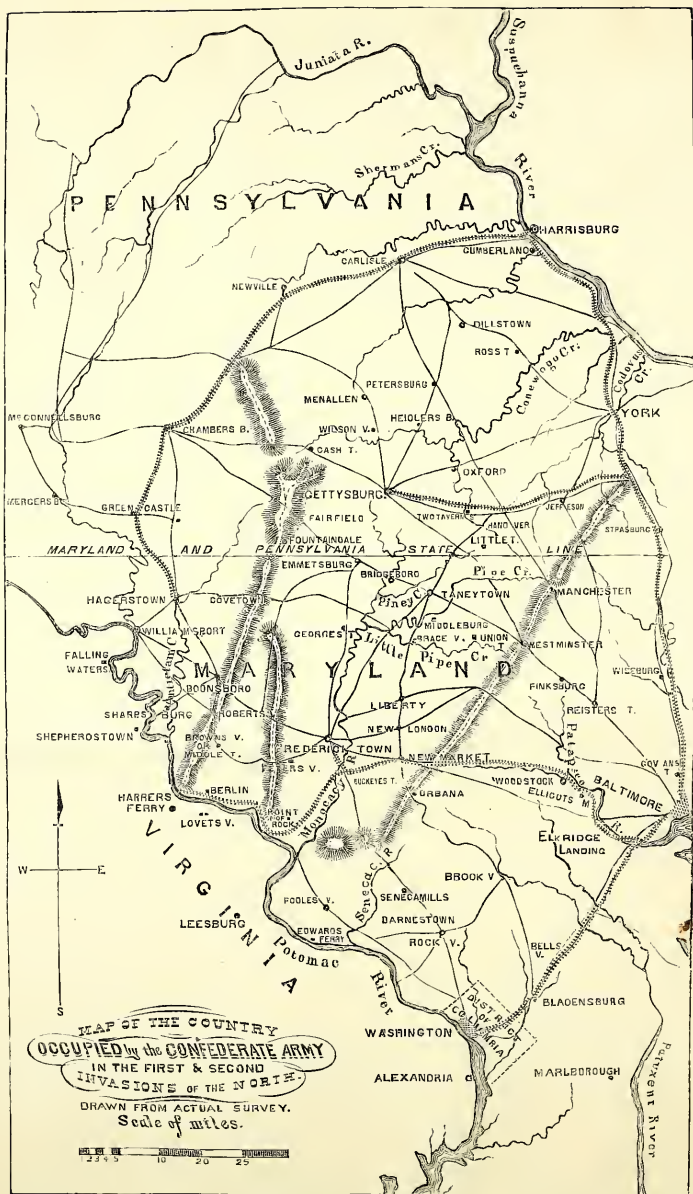
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V.

THE INVASION OF THE NORTH.

SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER, 1862.

I.

OVER THE BORDER.

THE defeat of General McClellan before Richmond, and his forced retreat to the James River, threw the Northern people into great gloom, though it did not cause them to relax their efforts. Then they had still an army left on the James capable of achieving success in that quarter, and one comparatively new and untried on the Rappahannock, whose future was expected to be all they could desire. They did not — it was not natural that they should — consider that the Army of the Potomac was in reality the most useful force in the service of the Union. They regarded it as having been rendered worthless by its defeat, and fixed all their hopes on the Army of Virginia. The defeat which this command sustained on the banks of Bull Run fell upon the North with crushing force. Every effort of the Federals during the whole year had now been rendered of no avail. A letter from Washington at that time declared, “After fifteen months of toil and bloodshed, we have now returned to the starting point, and the whole work has to be commenced

over again." The Northern people regarded their future with dread and anxiety, and they confidently expected to hear that their Capital had fallen into the hands of General Lee.

This was not all. General Lee had not only inflicted a terrible defeat upon the Federal army, and thrown the Government and people into gloom and disappointment, but he had, by his brilliant success, opened to his hungry soldiers the rich harvests and resources of the great Valley of Virginia, and the surrounding country. Up to this time the enemy had been living upon these resources. Now they were transferred to the army of the South, which needed them so greatly. Besides this, General Lee had compelled the withdrawal of the army of General McClellan from the James River, and had drawn off the forces intended for operations against the interior of the South from points on the coast.

It was highly desirable to prolong such a state of affairs, and it was the part of wisdom to attempt to inflict still greater damage upon the enemy before they should have time to recover from their disasters. The army was too poorly provided with clothing, shoes, ammunition, or any of the necessities of war, to allow the hope that it could, even at such a favorable moment, conquer a peace upon Northern soil; but there was great reason for believing that it could so far cripple the Federals as to retain them north of the Potomac for the protection of their own territory, and thus prevent another invasion of Virginia, until such a course on the part of the enemy should be rendered impossible by the arrival of the winter.

The condition of Maryland also favored the plan of entering that State. The great mass of her people were attached to the South, not only by a common interest, by tradition, and long association, but also by the warmest sympathy. The State had been prevented from uniting with the South only by the strong hand of the Federal Government, and every report brought

across the border confirmed the opinion that the people of Maryland only awaited the arrival of the Southern army to take up arms against the United States. It was thought that if they could not directly assist the Confederates by uniting with them, they could do much in their favor by drawing off from the army at the command of the Federal Government, the strong force which would be necessary to repress such an uprising. There can be no doubt that in entertaining these views, General Lee was justified by the real condition of affairs, and that his views were sound and well founded. He was not, however, so visionary as the press at the time reported him. He fully appreciated the difficulties which would attend an uprising on the part of the people of Maryland, who had been disarmed by the Federal Government, and whose State was occupied in force by the Federal army. He knew that until it was in his power to afford those people an assurance of assistance and protection, it would be unwise to expect them to attempt an undertaking which must fail without it received his active coöperation, and which, failing, would place them at the mercy of an exasperated Government. Therefore he "expected to derive more assistance in the attainment of his object from the just fears of the Washington Government, than from any active demonstration on the part of the people," until he should be able to give them assurance of his continued protection.*

The army was not prepared for invasion. Besides its extraordinary fatigue, resulting from the tremendous exertions it had made during the campaign, many of the men were suffering for want of shoes, and had literally marked their way to the Potomac by their bleeding feet. A lack of clothing had compelled them to put up with rags and dirt, and the quartermaster's and commissary departments were administered in such a manner as to keep the troops almost constantly in a state of privation.

* General Lee's Report.

The amount of transportation at hand was inadequate to the wants of the army, and the supplies of ammunition were limited.

Nevertheless, the advantages which a sudden offensive movement offered, were believed to outweigh these disadvantages, and General Lee determined to cross the Potomac and enter Maryland without delay. As long as the enemy remained south of the Potomac, they would endanger his communications. To force them to withdraw to the Washington side of the river, Lee resolved to cross the border east of the Blue Ridge, by which movement he would threaten both Washington and Baltimore. This accomplished, and Virginia freed from the presence of the Federal army, he proposed to move his forces into Western Maryland, establish his communications with Richmond through the Shenandoah Valley, "and, by threatening Pennsylvania, induce the enemy to follow," and thus draw them from their base of supplies.*

The army was now united, D. H. Hill's command having arrived on the 2d of September, while the troops were enjoying a brief rest at Chantilly.

On the 4th of September, D. H. Hill's division, which had been assigned the advance was moved to the Potomac, which it reached at a point nearly opposite the mouth of the Monocacy. The Federal forces along the river were driven off, and the division crossed over. The night and next day were spent in destroying the locks and embankment of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, one of the principal means of supplying Washington with fuel.†

On the 5th of September Jackson's corps crossed the river, at White's Ford, and bivouacked near the Three Springs, in the State of Maryland. D. H. Hill immediately resumed his march, and followed Jackson. By the 7th of September the

* General Lee's Report.

† Reports of Generals Lee and D. H. Hill.

entire army was over the Potomac, and in the enemy's country. The passage of the river was made with thrilling cheers, waving flags, and martial music, and amidst unbounded enthusiasm. The troops regarded themselves as the avengers of an outraged and injured people, and they were in high spirits at the prospect of transferring the war from their own soil to that of the enemy.

On the morning of the 6th, the march was resumed, the advance being conducted by General D. H. Hill, who, in the absence of General Jackson, (temporarily disabled by a fall from his horse,) commanded Jackson's corps, as well as his own division.*

During the morning the army reached Frederick City. The troops were encamped between the city and the Monocacy River, Ewell's and Hill's divisions being posted at Monocacy Station, on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, to cover the roads from Washington. Only one brigade (J. R. Jones') was allowed to enter the city, and that one was sent there to protect the inhabitants and their property. Strict orders were issued requiring the troops to respect the property of the people of the State, and threatening with severe punishment those who attempted to pillage or destroy. The people were assured that the Confederate army had come amongst them as friends. No man's possessions were taken from him. Whatever was wanted was paid for — in Confederate money it is true, but still with an expression of willingness on the part of the vendors to receive the Southern currency. Even the fence rails burned by the soldiers were carefully paid for. No man's liberty was assailed, and the troops were strictly charged to treat persons holding hostile sentiments with kindness and forbearance. The City of Frederick was patrolled by a strong provost guard, but its presence was unnecessary, as not a single case of misdemeanor occurred during the stay of the Southern army.

* Report of General D. H. Hill.

The Northern people were astonished at such a course on the part of the Southerners. They had expected that a Confederate invasion would be marked by such scenes as have made the reputation of Pope's army infamous, and they could not conceal their surprise at the forbearance and generosity of the "ragged rebels."

When it is remembered that the Confederate army had just seen the fair fields of Virginia devastated, and their friends and kindred plundered, insulted, and frequently driven from their homes amid suffering and danger, by the Union troops, and that now they were in the enemy's country, with the memory of these things still burning in their hearts, surrounded by plenty, which they might have appropriated in spite of General Lee's orders to the contrary, a proper appreciation may be formed of their conduct. They triumphed nobly over the worst instincts of an army, and by their heroism, — heroism not less high than that shown by them in battle — they have won a glorious name. It must have been a proud moment for General Lee when he saw this, for he must have known that his troops were influenced as much by their love for him, as by their sense of right and justice. They were not willing to bring discredit upon either themselves or their commander.

The reception of the troops in Maryland was not what they had anticipated. The majority of the people of Western Maryland were thoroughly loyal to the Union, so that the friends of the Confederate army in that region were but few. The Unionists made no secret of their dislike of the South, and comforted themselves by informing the troops that McClellan would soon be after them. The secessionists in some cases did what they could to encourage and aid the army, but in many instances their Southern ardor was checked by the sight of the ragged and dirty soldiers, whose personal appearance spoke eloquently of greater suffering and hardship than these "gentlemen" were

willing to undergo. During the first days, recruiting offices were opened in Frederick, but recruits came in with marvellous slowness.

It was amidst these discouraging circumstances that General Lee issued the following address to the people of the State :

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
Near FREDERICKTOWN, Sept. 8th, 1862.

“TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND :

“It is right that you should know the purpose that has brought the army under my command within the limits of your State, so far as that purpose concerns yourselves.

“The people of the Confederate States have long watched, with the deepest sympathy, the wrongs and outrages that have been inflicted upon the citizens of a commonwealth allied to the States of the South by the strongest social, political, and commercial ties.

“They have seen, with profound indignation, their sister State deprived of every right, and reduced to the condition of a conquered province.

“Under the pretence of supporting the Constitution, but in violation of its most valuable provisions, your citizens have been arrested and imprisoned upon no charge, and contrary to all forms of law. The faithful and manly protest against this outrage, made by the venerable and illustrious Marylander, to whom, in better days, no citizen appealed for right in vain, was treated with scorn and contempt. The government of your chief city has been usurped by armed strangers; your Legislature has been dissolved by the unlawful arrest of its members; freedom of the press and of speech have been suppressed; words have been declared offences by an arbitrary decree of the Federal Executive, and citizens ordered to be tried by a military commission for what they may dare to speak.

“Believing that the people of Maryland possessed a spirit too lofty to submit to such a Government, the people of the South have long wished to aid you in throwing off this foreign yoke, to enable you again to enjoy the inalienable rights of freemen, and restore independence and sovereignty to your State.

“In obedience to this wish, our army has come among you, and is prepared to assist you with the power of its arms, in regaining the rights of which you have been despoiled. This, citizens of Maryland, is our mission, so far as you are concerned. No constraint upon your free will is intended, — no intimidation will be allowed. We know no enemies among you, and will protect all, of every opinion. It is for you to decide your destiny, freely and without constraint. This army will respect your choice whatever it may be; and while the Southern people will rejoice to welcome you to your natural position amongst them, they will only welcome you when you come of your own free will.

“R. E. LEE, *Gen. Commanding.*”

This proclamation was read with interest by the people of Maryland, but it brought no recruits.

Certain Southern writers have taken it upon themselves to denounce the people of Maryland with great bitterness for not rising against the Federal authorities, in response to this proclamation. This, however, is unfair. I have shown that General Lee himself did not expect any movement on the part of the people until he had shown himself able to assist and protect them. Unfortunately he was compelled to enter a portion of Maryland, where it was known that no sympathy was felt for the Southern cause. The friends of the South were in Eastern and Southern Maryland, and between them and Frederick City lay the Federal army, holding every road by which

the people could move to join General Lee. Moreover, the invasion of the State was then simply an experiment which had to prove itself a success before the people could have faith in it. General Lee was not in a condition to afford the slightest assistance to the Southern men of Maryland, and it would have been madness in them to attempt an uprising. Had General Lee been able to reach Baltimore or Prince George County, I do not doubt that his army would have been greatly increased in a very short time. Still, these things were not known to the troops at the time, and their disappointment in finding so few friends and so many enemies was very bitter.

When General Lee adopted his plan of the campaign, he counted on carrying his whole army with him. He was destined to be greatly disappointed in this. During the march from Manassas to the Potomac, thousands of Confederate soldiers straggled from the ranks, and threw themselves down by the wayside, leaving the army to move on without them. Many of these men—the majority of them—were unable to continue the march. Want of rest and food, the severe marching and fighting, added to their past hardships, had exhausted them. Especially was this straggling caused by the want of shoes. The most of the men were barefooted, and their feet were so mangled by the sharp rocks of the road, that they could not walk. Many were rendered lame for months, some for life, by trying to keep up with the army in spite of their sufferings. Still there were others—to the number of thousands—who lagged behind from the vilest of motives. The lack of discipline in the Southern army was painfully instanced here.

When General Lee was informed of the full extent of this evil, he was startled by a sense of the danger in which it placed him, and exclaimed with tears, “My army is ruined by straggling.”

II.

THE CAPTURE OF HARPER'S FERRY.

The entrance to the Valley of Virginia was guarded by the position of Harper's Ferry. With this post in possession of a Federal garrison, an invasion of Maryland from the Valley, was an impossibility. But when the Confederates had entered Maryland Harper's Ferry not only became useless to the Federals, but also constituted a trap in which the whole garrison might be shut up and captured. A sound military policy would have dictated an immediate evacuation of the post as soon as General Lee passed the Potomac, but General Halleck, under whose immediate orders the Federal troops at Harper's Ferry had been placed, for some reason attached an exaggerated value to the position, and ordered that it should be held. The garrison consisted of about nine thousand men, under Colonel Miles. Martinsburg was held by a force of twenty-five hundred men, under General White.

General Lee supposed that his adversary, in accordance with the plainest rules of common sense, as well as military silence, would withdraw the garrison from Harper's Ferry. General McClellan constantly urged this, but General Halleck decided upon holding the post. This being the case, General Lee could not establish his communications through the Valley without driving away or capturing Colonel Miles' command. He resolved to attempt its capture. Thus he was compelled to turn aside from his original plan, to undertake this important expedition, and this with his army so greatly weakened by the straggling of the troops. So it happened, strangely enough, that this blunder of General Halleck became a real disad-

vantage to the Confederate commander, inasmuch as it clogged and hindered his movements, and enabled General McClellan to come up with him and strike a blow at him under circumstances most unfavorable to the Confederate army.

In order to reduce Harper's Ferry, General Jackson was directed to march on the 10th of September, and, after passing Middleton, take the route to the Potomac, crossing the river at the most convenient point, and, after driving the enemy from Martinsburg, move direct upon Harper's Ferry, disposing his forces in such a manner as to cut off the retreat of the garrison to the North. At the same time General McLaws, with his own and R. H. Anderson's divisions, was ordered to seize Maryland Heights, on the north side of the Potomac, opposite Harper's Ferry, and General Walker was ordered to take possession of Loudon Heights, at the intersection of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. When Harper's Ferry was reduced, and the Valley cleared of the enemy, these commands were to rejoin General Lee at Boonsboro or Hagerstown.*

General Jackson commenced his march from Frederick City on the 10th of September, and recrossed the Potomac at Light's Ford, near Williamsport, the next day. Hill's division moved on the turnpike direct to Martinsburg, while Ewell's and Jackson's divisions moved to the North Mountain depot on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, about seven miles northwest of Martinsburg, where they bivouacked for the night. Alarmed by the approach of these forces, the Federals evacuated Martinsburg during the night, and fell back to Harper's Ferry.

On the morning of the 12th, General Jackson entered Martinsburg, capturing a large quantity of stores abandoned by the enemy. Pressing on during the day, he came in sight of the enemy's outer line on Bolivar Heights, in the rear of Harper's Ferry, the next morning, the 13th, at eleven o'clock. General

* General Lee's Report.

Hill, who led the advance, went into camp near Halltown, about two miles from Bolivar Heights. The other divisions encamped near by, and General Jackson set to work to ascertain if Walker and McLaws had arrived. No answer to his signals being returned from the opposite mountains, he dispatched couriers to Maryland and Loudon Heights, to learn if the troops of McLaws and Walker were in position.

General Walker crossed the Potomac on the night of the 10th, at Point of Rocks, and moved rapidly on Loudon Heights, which were successfully occupied on the night of the 13th. General Jackson's courier reached him soon after the arrival of his column on the heights, and he returned answer to General Jackson, announcing his presence. Walker's arrival was discovered on the morning of the 14th, and the enemy at once opened on him with their batteries. Walker replied, and cannonaded the town for about two hours, his fire doing some damage to the Federals.

The task assigned to General McLaws was more difficult. Maryland Heights is the name given to the extreme southern portion of Elk Ridge, lying immediately on the Potomac, opposite Harper's Ferry. The town of Harper's Ferry is completely commanded by these heights, which were fortified and held by the enemy. When General Halleck ordered Colonel Miles to hold Harper's Ferry, the latter officer should have withdrawn at once to Maryland Heights, where he could have maintained his position until McClellan's arrival. He did not do this, but remained in the town with his main body, holding the heights with a small part of his force. General McLaws' duty was to drive off this force and capture the heights, when it would be impossible for the garrison at Harper's Ferry to hold out, and their escape being cut off, they would be obliged to surrender.

McLaws marched on the 11th, and on the 12th arrived in front of the Federal position on Maryland Heights, in the

meantime taking care to occupy the passes in South Mountain by which the enemy at Washington could send assistance to Harper's Ferry. He at once opened the attack, driving in the Federal skirmishers until darkness put an end to the conflict. The inhabitants of the country informed him that the Federal position on the heights was very strong, and defended by powerful artillery, thus causing General McLaws to advance cautiously, and more slowly than he would have done but for these reports, in which the people all agreed, but which proved in the end to be false.

The next morning, the 13th, he renewed his advance, and, after a sharp and spirited engagement through dense woods and over a rough and rugged country, succeeded in carrying the enemy's main line, which was very strong, and, by half past four in the afternoon, gained possession of the heights. He at once disposed his troops from Maryland Heights to Sandy Hook, about a mile below, on the river, commanding the town and cutting off the escape of the garrison.*

General Jackson had expected that all the troops would reach their positions in time to enable him to storm the enemy's works on the 13th, which would have enabled him to rejoin General Lee on the 14th. The divisions not being in place until it was too late to make the attack, he deferred it until the next day.

The Federals held a strong position, strengthened by well constructed works on Bolivar Heights, extending from near the Shenandoah to the Potomac. While they held these works very little could be done by McLaws' and Walker, as their guns but imperfectly commanded this line. To remedy this, General Jackson determined to force the Federals from Bolivar Heights back into the town of Harper's Ferry.

Accordingly General Hill, who held the right was ordered to move down the left bank of the Shenandoah, turn the enemy's

* General McLaws' Report.

left flank, and gain the town. Ewell's division was to move along the turnpike, to support Hill, and Jackson's division was to make a demonstration on the Federal right at the same time, while the cavalry, under Major Massie, were to operate between Jackson's left and the Potomac and prevent the garrison from escaping up the river.

During the afternoon of the 14th, the "Stonewall brigade" attacked the enemy's right, driving in their cavalry and securing an eminence to the left of Bolivar Heights, and near the Potomac, which was immediately occupied by the batteries of Poague and Carpenter. At the same time, A. P. Hill's division moved down the Shenandoah to turn the enemy's left. "Observing an eminence crowning the extreme left" of the Federal line, "occupied by infantry, but without artillery and protected only by an abatis of fallen timber, Pender, Archer, and Brockenborough were ordered to gain the crest of that hill, while Branch and Gregg were directed to march along the river, and, during the night, to take advantage of the ravines, cutting the precipitous banks of the river, and establish themselves on the plain to the left and rear of the enemy's works."* Ewell's division moved along the turnpike in three columns, one on the road and one on each side of it, until it reached Halltown, where it was formed in line of battle, by its commander, General Lawton. Continuing to advance, the division reached and occupied School House Hill, immediately in front of the Federal works, where it bivouacked for the night. During the night, Colonel Crutchfield, Jackson's Chief of Artillery, crossed ten guns of Ewell's division to the opposite side of the Shenandoah, and established them in a position from which they could enfilade the enemy's line. The remainder of the artillery belonging to this division was posted on School House Hill.

The investment of Harper's Ferry was now complete, and

* Gen. Jackson's Report.

that night Jackson signalled to Generals McLaws and Walker his famous message — “I have occupied and now hold the enemy’s first line of intrenchments, and, with the blessing of God, will capture the whole force early in the morning.”

As the day dawned, on the morning of the 15th of September, Jackson’s artillery opened upon the Federals. The batteries on School House Hill attacked the enemy in front, Poague’s and Carpenter’s guns opened from the right, followed by the guns sent over the Shenandoah, in the rear of the enemy, by Colonel Crutchfield, and finally by the batteries on Loudon and Maryland Heights. The cannonade was terrific, the most of the guns being scarcely a thousand yards from the Federal works.

In about an hour the Federal guns seemed to be silenced. Immediately the batteries of Hill’s division ceased firing, and the infantry moved forward to storm the works. Pender’s brigade had scarcely commenced to advance when the Federal artillery again opened, and the batteries of Pegram and Crenshaw dashed forward and poured a heavy fire into the enemy.

A white flag now fluttered from the Federal works, and immediately the Southern guns ceased firing, and the advance of the infantry was checked. A message was received from General White, (Colonel Miles having been mortally wounded,) announcing his readiness to capitulate, and shortly afterwards the post and garrison were formally surrendered to General Jackson, General A. P. Hill conducting the negotiations. The terms accorded were liberal. The officers and men were paroled, and allowed to retain all their personal effects, and the former their side-arms, transportation being furnished them for the removal of their property.

Eleven thousand troops were surrendered, together with seventy-three pieces of artillery, thirteen thousand stand of arms, two hundred wagons, and a large amount of stores. Jackson’s loss was small.

In the meantime events of great importance had occurred beyond Elk Ridge, and General Jackson was met immediately after the surrender of Harper's Ferry by an order from General Lee to hasten to rejoin him with all speed. Leaving General Hill to receive the surrender, and superintend the removal of the captured property, and directing McLaws and Walker to follow as rapidly as possible, Jackson at once set off to rejoin General Lee, and by a severe night march came up with him at Sharpsburg on the morning of the 16th.

It is necessary now to go back to the time when the army left Frederick City.

III.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN.

When General Lee entered Maryland his design was not to make a direct attack on either Washington or Baltimore, but to manœuvre so as to draw McClellan away towards the Cumberland Valley, thus forcing him to uncover those cities, when General Lee could either elude McClellan and fall suddenly upon them, or force the Young Napoleon to fight at such a distance from his base of operations.

In accordance with this plan he moved from Frederick, on the 10th, after Jackson had started, and passing South Mountain, marched towards Boonsboro, leaving General Stuart with the cavalry east of the mountains to watch the movements of the Federal army, which was known to be slowly approaching. A report having been received that the enemy were approaching from the direction of Chambersburgh, Pennsylvania, General Longstreet was sent to Hagerstown to watch them and hold them in check, while D. H. Hill halted near Boonsboro to

prevent the escape of the garrison of Harper's Ferry through Pleasant Valley, and to support the cavalry.* It was confidently expected that Harper's Ferry would fall on the 13th, and the advance of the Federal army was so slow that General Lee expected to capture that place and reunite his columns before McClellan could arrive. Then the army would move towards Pennsylvania.

In the meantime the Federals had not been idle. When the defeated remnants of Pope's army crowded into the lines of Washington, it became necessary to find a leader who could restore order and confidence to the troops, and place them once more in the field. There was but one man who could do this — for he was the only one in whom the army yet retained confidence — and that was General McClellan. After his withdrawal from the James he had been reduced to the command of the defences of the Capital, to the great delight of his enemies. Now, amidst the dismay of his Government, every one pointed to him as the only commander capable of offering any resistance to the victorious Southern legions. President Lincoln requested him to resume the command of the Army of the Potomac, placing at his disposal all of the troops around Washington. General McClellan promptly resumed his former position, and commenced with energy to put the army in condition for active service. The remains of his old army and that of General Pope were organized into one compact body. Hooker was assigned to the command of the 1st corps (McDowell's old corps); the 9th corps of Burnside's old force, was under General Reno. The 12th corps, formerly commanded by Banks, was given to General Mansfield. General Burnside's corps was also brought up from Fredericksburg, and united with McClellan's forces.†

* General Lee's Report.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 197.

On the 5th of September, as soon as it was known that General Lee had crossed into Maryland, General McClellan moved forward from Washington towards Frederick City to meet him. His advance was made by five parallel roads, the Army of the Potomac being disposed so as to cover both Washington and Baltimore. The left flank rested on the Potomac, and the right on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The command of the right wing was given to General Burnside, General Sumner held the centre, and General Franklin the left wing. The effective strength of this army was eighty-seven thousand one hundred and sixty-four men of all arms.*

The emergency was so great that the work of reorganization had to be done while the troops were on the march. It was well done, and reflects the highest credit upon General McClellan, to whom alone it was due. He displayed more energy than he had ever shown, and it was no slight achievement to take command of a mutinous and demoralized army, just after a crushing defeat, and in ten days be in front of the enemy with a solid and reorganized command.

General McClellan, being in utter ignorance of Lee's intentions, moved very slowly and with great caution. He was certain of one thing only—that General Lee would attempt to capture the garrison of Harpér's Ferry, and he repeatedly urged his Government either to order its withdrawal, or place it under his command, in order that he might remove it from the danger which threatened it. His requests were unheeded at first, but finally the garrison was placed under his command. It was then too late, however, to save it, as the sequel proved.

Moving on cautiously he reached Frederick on the 12th of September, driving out the cavalry that had been left there by General Stuart to watch him. On the 13th, by a piece of extraordinary good fortune, General McClellan gained possession

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 198.

of General Lee's confidential order to General D. H. Hill, giving the plan of the campaign. This order had been lost by General Hill near Frederick, and found by some person in the Federal advanced forces, when the vicinity of Frederick was occupied by them.*

* The order was as follows :

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
September 9, 1862.

"SPECIAL ORDERS,
No. 191.

"The army will resume its march to-morrow, taking the Hagerstown road. General Jackson's command will form the advance, and after passing Middleton, with such portion as he may select, will take the route towards Sharpsburg, cross the Potomac at the most convenient point and by Friday night take possession of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, capture such of the enemy as may be at Martinsburg, and intercept such as may attempt to escape from Harper's Ferry.

"General Longstreet's command will pursue the same road as far as Boonsboro, where it will halt with the reserve, supply and baggage trains of the army.

"General McLaws, with his own division and that of General R. H. Anderson, will follow General Longstreet. On reaching Middleton, he will take the route to Harper's Ferry, and by Friday morning possess himself of the Maryland Heights, and endeavor to capture the enemy at Harper's Ferry and vicinity.

"General Walker, with his division, after accomplishing the object in which he is now engaged, will cross the Potomac at Cheek's Ford, and ascend its right bank to Lovettsville, take possession of Loudon Heights if practicable, by Friday morning, Key's Ford on his left, and the road between the end of the mountain, and the Potomac on his right. He will, as far as practicable, coöperate with General McLaws and General Jackson, in intercepting the retreat of the enemy.

"General D. H. Hill's division will form the rear-guard of the army, pursuing the road taken by the main body. The reserve artillery, ordnance, and supply trains, &c., will precede General Hill.

"General Stuart will detach a squadron of cavalry to accompany the commands of General Longstreet, Jackson, and McLaws, and with the main body of the cavalry will cover the route of the army, and bring up all stragglers that may have been left behind.

"The commands of Generals Jackson, McLaws, and Walker, after accomplishing the objects for which they have been detached, will join the main body of the army at Boonsboro or Hagerstown.

The possession of this document was of the greatest value to General McClellan. It furnished him with an accurate description of General Lee's designs, showed him the disposition of Lee's forces, and gave him an advantage over the Southern army which the reader will readily appreciate, and which should have resulted in the destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia,—in short, that army was, by the discovery of this order, placed at the mercy of General McClellan.

The Federal commander resolved to press his advantage, and at once urged forward his army. He meant to secure the passes of South Mountain, and throw his forces into Pleasant Valley, where they could fall upon the divided Confederate force, beat it in detail, and rescue the garrison of Harper's Ferry from the clutches of Stonewall Jackson.

McClellan advanced rapidly, and on the afternoon of the 13th, while McLaws and Walker were getting into position at Harper's Ferry, arrived in front of the passes of South Mountain, driving back the cavalry, who exerted themselves to impede his progress in order to give General Lee time to bring up troops to dispute the passage of the mountains.

After leaving the Potomac, beginning at the northern shore of that river, and extending through Pennsylvania, the great range of the Blue Ridge is called the South Mountain. Two miles further westward is the range known as Maryland Heights. The country lying between these two ranges is named Pleasant Valley, and is from two to three miles in width. It is very rugged, and almost Alpine in its character. There are two roads leading from Frederick City to the western

"Each regiment, on the march, will habitually carry its axes in the regimental ordnance wagons, for use of the men at their encampments, to procure wood.

"By command of GENERAL R. E. LEE,
R. H. CHILTON, *A. A. General.*"

"MAJOR-GENERAL D. H. HILL, *Comd'g Division.*"

part of the State — the main, or Hagerstown road, which passes the South Mountain at Turner's Gap, near the village of Boonsboro, and another which passes the mountain at Crampton's Gap about five or six miles farther to the south. These passes are very strong, and are impregnable against direct attacks if properly defended. They may be turned, however, by mountain roads leading to positions commanding them, high upon the sides of the mountain.

When General McClellan learned the object of Lee's movements and the disposition of his forces, he determined to throw his centre and right against the pass leading to Boonsboro; while Franklin's corps should force the passage of Crampton's Gap, attack McLaws in the rear, drive him off, and rescue the garrison of Harper's Ferry.

General Lee was informed of the presence of the enemy at South Mountain on the afternoon of the 13th of September. The suddenness of the movement surprised him, for it showed a clear conception by General McClellan of Lee's designs, and the latter was as yet ignorant of the fate of his order to General D. H. Hill. Seeing the danger which threatened him, General Lee ordered General D. H. Hill to occupy Turner's Gap, and prevent the enemy from passing through. Up to this time nothing had been heard from Harper's Ferry, and it was still believed by General Lee that the place would fall that day — the thirteenth. He had counted on reuniting his army after the fall of that place before McClellan could arrive, and but for the discovery made by the latter at Frederick, he would have done so. It was a part of his original plan to draw the enemy from their base of supplies, and as a means of doing this, he had intended to permit McClellan to pass South Mountain unmolested. His troops were disposed with this intention on the 13th. Now, however, it was necessary to hold the mountain passes until Harper's Ferry should fall, and to keep McClellan east of the mountains until the army was prepared to reunite before him.

Accordingly General D. H. Hill was informed of the danger which threatened the army, and instructed to hold his ground as long as possible. General Hill at first sent back the brigades of Garland and Colquitt, but subsequently learning that the enemy were in heavy force, moved his whole division to the Gap. General Lee ordered General Longstreet to march at once to Hill's support.

General Hill had been informed by General Stuart that only two brigades of the enemy were threatening the pass, and that one brigade would be sufficient to hold it.* A personal inspection, however, satisfied him that if he wished to hold it he must use his whole division, which he at once ordered up. Had the Federals, who came in front of the pass in heavy force on the afternoon of the 13th, attacked the position at once, it must have fallen, as it was wholly at their mercy, being defended by less than two thousand men. The bold front assumed by Hill induced them to await the arrival of their main body.

Hill's division was only five thousand strong, and much too weak to hold the position properly. It could occupy the pass itself, but could afford very little protection to the two mountain roads, — the one on the right and the other on the left of the pass, — by which it might be turned. The road on the right led to a sharp, jagged peak which commanded the whole position. Should the enemy seize this point, it would be impossible to hold the mountain.†

About seven o'clock in the morning, the enemy (Reno's corps) opened a sharp artillery fire on the Southern right, having yet failed to see the importance of the peak on their left. Soon after the cannonade began, General Reno pushed forward a strong column through the heavy woods, and endeavored to seize the road leading to the right of the pass. The

* General D. H. Hill's Report.

† General D. H. Hill's Report.

attack was made by Garland's brigade, which at first checked the Federal advance, but General Garland being killed, his brigade became demoralized, and was forced back, and Reno's men, pressing on, occupied the first ridge on the side of the mountain. Had they continued to press on, they could have gained the road. They were, however, too much injured to pursue their advantage, having suffered severely from the fire of Garland's men, losing their commander, General Reno, an able officer.

General Hill promptly moved up Anderson's brigade to take the place of Garland's troops. Anderson was ordered to hold the road for which the enemy were contending, and Colonel Rosser, with his regiment of cavalry, dismounted as sharpshooters, and a battery of artillery, was directed to hold a mountain-path still farther to the right. At the same time General Hill ordered Colquitt's brigade and two batteries to support Anderson, and moved several guns to a point commanding the approaches to the peak on his left, and the right of the pass.

The enemy now began to appreciate the importance of the peak, and made several attempts to seize the road leading to it, all of which were repulsed by Hill. Rodes' brigade was ordered by General Hill to occupy the peak. Heavy skirmishing continued between the opposing forces, and about three o'clock in the afternoon the advanced brigades of Longstreet's command, under General Drayton and Colonel G. T. Anderson, arrived. They brought about one thousand nine hundred men with them. Hill's single division had held the enemy in check nearly eight hours, and he was anxious to defeat them before they could commence their principal attack.

In the meantime the Federals collected rapidly in front of Hill's position. By two o'clock in the afternoon the entire command of General Burnside, consisting of Reno's and Hooker's corps, fully thirty thousand strong, had arrived. The

importance of the peak on the Southern left had by this time become fully appreciated, and General Burnside now directed his efforts against it. Hooker's corps led the assault, which was made about four o'clock.

General Hill, wishing to prevent this movement, had collected on his right the brigades of Ripley, Anderson, and Drayton, and thrown them upon Reno's corps. Drayton's brigade was repulsed and driven in disorder, but Anderson and Ripley maintained their ground, checking the efforts of the enemy to advance their line.

While this was going on, Hooker made a sharp attack on the Confederate left held by the brigade of General Rodes. The ground was very difficult, and of such a character that the enemy in advancing were almost entirely sheltered from the fire of Rodes' artillery. The infantry of this gallant brigade inflicted severe loss upon the Federals, and gallantly contested the ground inch by inch. For several hours this single brigade of twelve hundred men repulsed the impetuous assaults of Hooker's corps, but, towards dark, Hooker, whose superior strength enabled him to extend his flanks so as almost to envelope Rodes' command, succeeded in forcing back the little band, and gaining the crest of the peak, the key point to Hill's whole position. Darkness now put an end to the battle.

Longstreet's main column reached the pass about four o'clock in the afternoon, and his troops were posted on the right and left of the turnpike, about the centre of Hill's line. They soon became actively engaged, although much exhausted by their long and severe march, and succeeded in repulsing the assaults of the enemy on the centre.

When the battle ended, the enemy had been repulsed in their assaults on Hill's centre, and driven back some distance on the right, but on the left they had carried the peak held by Rodes' brigade, and this placed the entire Southern line at their

mercy. The position could no longer be maintained successfully, and it was necessary for the Southern army to retire from it before the attack could be renewed by the enemy in the morning. Besides this, the necessity for holding the mountain was now at an end. General Lee had been informed by General Jackson that Harper's Ferry would undoubtedly be captured the next day. He therefore resolved to retire from South Mountain, and take position at Sharpsburg, where he would be on the flank of any force moving through Pleasant Valley upon McLaws on Maryland Heights, and be able to reunite his divided columns successfully. His position there would also command the fords of the Potomac, and keep open his line of retreat into Virginia in case of disaster. Accordingly the troops were withdrawn during the night towards Antietam Creek.

While the battle was going on at Turner's Gap, events of no less importance were transpiring at Crampton's Gap, about six miles to the southward. Franklin reached this position about nine or ten o'clock on the morning of the 14th, and at once made his dispositions for attack, throwing forward both of his divisions, Slocum's on the right and Smith's on the left.

The position was held by a weak brigade of McLaws' division, under General Howell Cobb. General McLaws was under the impression that the pass was threatened by a very small force of the enemy. He was confirmed in this opinion by General Stuart's assertion that he did not believe the enemy's force amounted to more than a brigade.* Stuart had been watching the Federal advance, and being deceived himself, had misinformed both D. H. Hill and McLaws as to the character of the Federal movements. General Cobb's three brigades had been posted at the Gap only a few hours, when Franklin made his

* General McLaws' Report.

attack. He was instructed by General McLaws to hold his position "if he lost his last man in doing it."

Franklin made a sharp attack, and met with a gallant resistance. It was vain for three small brigades to attempt to hold such a force in check. Yet it took three hours for Franklin to dislodge Cobb and carry the pass, which was attended with a loss of four hundred prisoners, seven hundred stand of arms and one piece of artillery on the part of the Confederates.

The news that the Federals had forced Crampton's Gap, took General McLaws by surprise, and placed him in a difficult position. His retreat up Pleasant Valley was cut off, and Harper's Ferry still held out. Should he retire along the river shore at the base of Maryland Heights, Franklin would fall upon his rear, and the garrison at Harper's Ferry would almost destroy his command as it moved under their fire. To attempt to retreat eastward would be to fall into the hands of the enemy. There was nothing to do but to defend his position as well as he was able. He at once moved all his force, except one regiment which he left to hold Maryland Heights opposite Harper's Ferry, and took position in Pleasant Valley, about a mile and a half from Crampton's Gap, from which Franklin's troops were debouching into the Valley. By the time the Confederate line was formed the darkness checked the advance of the enemy.

The next morning McLaws awaited Franklin's attack, but the latter, deceived by the bold front of the Confederates, proceeded cautiously to select positions from which his artillery could command the Southern line.

During the morning General McLaws was informed that Harper's Ferry had surrendered, and was instructed by General Jackson to withdraw to the south side of the Potomac, and hasten to General Lee's assistance. McLaws performed the delicate task of retiring down the Valley with great skill. He crossed over to Harper's Ferry at two o'clock that afternoon,

and at eight the next morning encamped at Halltown to rest his men. Resuming his march on the 16th, he reached the army at Sharpsburg about sunrise on the morning of the 17th.

The Confederate loss at South Mountain was severe, being about three thousand men, half of whom were prisoners. The enemy's loss was about eighteen hundred, including General Reno.

IV.

SHARPSBURG.

Thus, although McClellan had greatly interfered with the Southern commander's plan of campaign, the resistance offered at South Mountain had enabled General Jackson to effect the capture of Harper's Ferry. The first part of General McClellan's designs had been baffled, and it now remained but to try the issue of a general engagement. He moved his army through the passes abandoned by the Confederates on the night of the 14th, reaching the west side of the mountain about eight o'clock on the morning of the 15th. During the day he followed slowly the route taken by General Lee, skirmishing with the Confederate rear-guard along the greater part of the way. Towards the afternoon, his command was brought to a sudden halt by the discovery that the Confederate army was in position on the west bank of Antietam Creek, a small tributary of the Potomac lying immediately in front of Sharpsburg.

I have shown how, by a series of adverse circumstances, General Lee was compelled to depart from his original plan of the campaign. First the retention of Harper's Ferry by the Federals, forced him to turn aside from the course he had marked out, and to lose much valuable time in the reduction

of the place; then the discovery of his programme by General McClellan gave the Union commander such an advantage that he ought to have destroyed the Confederate army. The bold resistance made by Hill and Longstreet at South Mountain, partly atoned for all this, but when the army reached the banks of the Antietam it was absolutely necessary to make a stand, in order to collect its scattered members. With the Federal army pressing on so closely, it was absolutely impossible to avoid a battle, whether General Lee wished to recross the river into Virginia or move against Pennsylvania. In any case the first necessity was to check the advance of the Federal army.

The chances of such a battle were decidedly against General Lee. His command was greatly reduced in strength, and somewhat disheartened by the unfavorable events of the campaign. When he reached Sharpsburg his entire army numbered less than forty thousand men — about thirty-three thousand in all. Of this force the commands of Jackson, McLaws, and Walker were absent. The Federal army was more than eighty thousand strong, and plentifully supplied with every necessity and most of the luxuries of a soldier, and had suffered less in every respect than that of the Confederates.

The Southern army occupied the ground lying between the Potomac and Antietam — which come together, a short distance south of Sharpsburg, at an angle of about forty-five degrees — and covering the fords of the Potomac in the neighborhood of Shepherdstown. The troops were disposed immediately in front of Sharpsburg, along the west bank of the Antietam. Longstreet's corps held the right, and was posted on the right of the Boonsboro turnpike, extending south of the town. D. H. Hill held the centre, and was posted on the left of the Boonsboro road, immediately in front of Sharpsburg. General Jackson, who arrived during the 16th, was posted on the left, the interval between his command and that of General D. H. Hill being

occupied by General Hood's division. Jackson's troops were at first held in reserve, and the country between the left and the Potomac was occupied by the cavalry, under General Stuart.

There are three bridges over the Antietam in the neighborhood of Sharpsburg. The lowest of these was in front of General Longstreet's position, the other almost exactly opposite the Confederate centre, and the third several miles higher up the stream. The Confederate force was too weak to cover this bridge, also, and General Lee concluded that McClellan would take advantage of this, and attempt to turn his left flank by crossing at this unguarded bridge.

The Federal army arrived on the left bank of the Antietam early in the afternoon of the fifteenth. General Lee had disposed his weak command to such advantage, that General McClellan decided to wait until his army was all on the ground before trying to force a passage of the creek. During the rest of the day and night his troops arrived. He formed his line with Burnside on his left, Porter in his centre, and Hooker, and Sumner on his right — Sumner having charge of his own corps and that of General Mansfield. A reconnoissance of the Confederate position revealed to the Federal commander the unguarded bridge, and, as General Lee had foreseen, he determined to throw his right wing over the creek at this point, and turn the Southern left. This duty he assigned to Hooker's corps, which was to be followed and supported by Sumner's two corps. The sixteenth was spent in occupying positions along the creek, it being his intention to force a direct passage as soon as the attack of Hooker should succeed on his right. The artillery was posted at favorable points to silence the fire of the Southern guns, and assist the movements of the infantry. These arrangements consumed the morning of the 16th.

In order to divert attention from Hooker's movement, Mc-

Clellan opened his artillery along his left and centre. This was responded to by the batteries of D. H. Hill's divisions. The Federal batteries were superior in every respect to those of the Confederates, and the latter were soon silenced.

Hooker commenced his march about four o'clock in the afternoon, and crossed the Antietam at the bridge I have mentioned, out of range of the Southern artillery. In order to guard against this movement, General Lee had placed the two brigades under General Hood on his left. Hood's line extended across this flank, and formed almost an acute angle with the position held by the rest of the army. Hooker attacked him about dusk, and Hood held his ground in a brisk skirmish which ensued. Both commands passed the night on this part of the field, within musket shot of each other. During the night General McClellan threw Mansfield's corps across the Creek to Hooker's assistance, and ordered Sumner to follow with his own corps early in the morning.

Hooker's attack revealed the design of the Federal commander, and General Lee ordered Jackson's corps, which had been held in reserve, to take position on Hood's left. This was promptly done. Jackson's right rested on the Hagerstown road, and his left extended toward the Potomac, protected by General Stuart with the cavalry and horse artillery.* At the same time Walker's two brigades were moved up on Longstreet's right, and towards ten o'clock Hood's troops were relieved by Lawton's and Trimble's brigades of Ewell's division.

The morning of the 17th of September was ushered in by a heavy cannonade from the Federal batteries on both sides of the Antietam. The position of those on the left bank enabled them to enfilade Jackson's line, and his troops suffered greatly from it.

Under the cover of this fire, Hooker advanced his corps,

* General Lee's Report.

eighteen thousand strong, and made a vigorous effort to get possession of the Hagerstown road, and the woods to the west of it. To meet this attack Jackson had but two divisions, his own, under General J. R. Jones, and Ewell's, under Lawton; and his total strength was four thousand men, so greatly had the command been reduced by losses and straggling.

The Federal onset was well made, and a murderous fire of shell, canister, and musketry poured into Jackson's weak line. General J. R. Jones was disabled, and borne from the field, and the command of Jackson's division passed to the gallant General Starke. In the face of this fire, Jackson advanced his lines, driving the enemy back on their left and centre, assisted by three brigades on D. H. Hill's extreme left, while Hooker's right division was repulsed by the splendid fire of Stuart's horse artillery, posted between Jackson's left and the Potomac. Yet so well sustained was the enemy's attack, that at length Jackson's lines began to waver, and his troops commenced to give ground. The corps had suffered horribly. Jackson's division had lost two commanders, (General Jones wounded, and General Starke killed,) and General Lawton, commanding Ewell's division, had been borne from the field desperately wounded. "Colonel Douglass, commanding Lawton's brigade had been killed, and the brigade had sustained a loss of three hundred and fifty-four killed and wounded, out of one thousand one hundred and fifty, losing five regimental commanders out of six. Hayes' brigade had sustained a loss of three hundred and twenty-three out of five hundred and fifty, including every regimental commander and all of his staff; and Colonel Walker and one of his staff had been disabled, and the brigade he was commanding had sustained a loss of two hundred and twenty-eight out of less than seven hundred present, including three out of four regimental commanders."*

* General Jackson's Report.

Yet, in spite of these losses, the heroic men made one more desperate effort, and drove Hooker's command with such fury that it began to show signs of demoralization. Hood's two brigades had been advanced to the relief of Lawton and Trimble, and bore their part nobly in this charge. The Confederates bought this success at a dear price, for they suffered severely in their advance.

Yet so vigorous was their assault that Hooker's men commenced to break to the rear. General Hooker himself was wounded and carried from the field, his absence contributing greatly to the disorder of his men. Mansfield's corps had come up about seven o'clock, and had shared the fate of Hooker's corps in this advance, and General Mansfield had been mortally wounded.

It was nine o'clock, and victory seemed about to declare in favor of the Confederates. Hooker's and Mansfield's corps had been driven back by Jackson's divisions and Hood's two brigades, — a force of not less than thirty thousand repulsed by less than six thousand, — and both of the Federal commanders had been carried from the field. The effort to turn Lee's left had signally failed, and the Federal right seemed on the point of becoming demoralized. At this moment General Sumner arrived with his corps, and restored order in the Federal ranks. He at once formed his line and renewed the effort to turn the Confederate left, extending his attack also, to the Southern centre under D. H. Hill.

Jackson's command had been so greatly shattered by the hard fighting of the morning, that it was in no condition to oppose the advance of Sumner, and it was swept back with ease by the Federals. Its ammunition was exhausted, and it fell back rapidly, and in some disorder. Now it seemed that it was the Confederates who were about to be defeated, for should Sumner succeed in his attack, Lee's left flank would be turned,

and he would be cut off from the Potomac. The gallant stand made by Jackson's corps before it began to retreat allowed General Lee time for an important movement.

Being apprised of General Jackson's critical condition, he detached Walker's two brigades from Longstreet's right, and sent them to Jackson. At the same time the division of General McLaws, which was just coming upon the battle-field from Harper's Ferry, was directed to hasten to the left. These troops arrived just as Jackson's men had been driven beyond their original position, and when it seemed that Sumner was about to double up the Confederate left on its centre.

Hastily reforming his line, and bringing his reënforcements into action, General Jackson fell upon Sumner with fury, and penetrating an interval between his right and centre, broke his line and drove him through the woods, across the Hagerstown road, and back to a point half a mile from where the charge began, regaining possession of his original position. Jackson's corps had suffered too much, and his reënforcements were too limited to permit him to follow up his advantage by an effort to force Sumner back over the Antietam, and he contented himself with holding the ground he had regained.

It was now noon. The attempt to turn Lee's left had failed. Jackson with less than twelve thousand men (including his reënforcements) had met and driven back the forty thousand splendid infantry of Hooker, Sumner and Mansfield. In the last attack General Sumner had been so severely punished that he made no further effort during the day to resume the offensive.

As the fighting ceased on the Southern left, it was taken up in the centre against which the divisions of French and Richardson had been ordered by General Sumner, who hoped thus to lighten the pressure with which Jackson was bearing down upon him. The first attack of these troops was made upon the

brigades of Colquitt, Ripley and McRea, of D. H. Hill's division, which had been advanced to Jackson's assistance. The enemy at first were driven back, but as they brought up fresh troops and continued to pour a heavy fire into Hill's line, some one raised the cry "They are flanking us." This cry ran along the Confederate ranks with lightning rapidity, the troops were panic stricken, and they fell back in disorder.* An effort was made to rally them at an old sunken road, running nearly at right angles to the Hagerstown turnpike, which had been their position previous to the advance. Here a stand was made, and these brigades were united with the rest of Hill's division. The enemy attempted to dislodge them from this position also, but the Confederates met this assault with such a stubborn resistance that the Federals retired behind the crest of a hill from which they maintained an irregular fire.†

General R. H. Anderson's division, between three and four thousand strong, now arrived and reported to General Hill. General Hill directed him to form in the rear of his line, but while this order was being executed an unexpected disaster befell this part of General Lee's army. An officer of General Rodes' brigade, during the temporary absence of General Rodes in another part of the field, mistook one of General Hill's orders as a command to fall back, and informed the commander of the 5th Alabama regiment that the order was intended for the whole brigade, and the other regimental commanders were immediately told this.‡ The brigade fell back, leaving a wide interval through which the enemy, who had been quick to perceive it, poured in heavy masses. G. B. Anderson's brigade, and then Wright's brigade, was broken, and driven back in disorder, General Anderson himself being wounded. Major-General R. H. Anderson and General Wright were also severely wounded.

* General D. H. Hill's Report.

† General Lee's Report.

‡ General D. H. Hill's Report.

The blow was so sudden and unexpected that it found General Hill trying to assist one of his wounded aides to a place of safety, secure in the belief that his line was in no danger. Prompt to act, however, he brought up a battery of four guns, and rallying a few hundred infantry, led them in person to the charge. This little force drove back the enemy and secured a position for the artillery, but the Federals still continued to make determined efforts to pierce Lee's centre. For half an hour the fight raged with great violence. The fire of the artillery was admirable, and caused great suffering in the Federal ranks.*

“Time and again,” says a writer who was present, “did the Federals perseveringly press close up to our ranks, so near indeed that their supporting batteries were obliged to cease firing lest they should kill their own men; but just as often were they driven back by the combined elements of destruction which we brought to bear upon them. It was an hour when every man was wanted. The sharpshooters of the enemy were picking off our principal officers continually, and especially those who made themselves conspicuous in the batteries.

“In this manner the company of Captain Miller, of the Washington Artillery, was nearly disabled, only two out of his four guns being fully manned. As it occupied a position directly under the eye of General Longstreet, and he saw the valuable part it was performing in defending the centre, that officer dismounted himself from his horse, and assisted by his Adjutant-General Major Sorrel, Major Fairfax, and General Drayton, worked one of the guns until the crisis was passed. To see a general officer wielding the destinies of a great fight, with its care and responsibilities upon his shoulders, performing the duty of a common soldier, in the thickest of the conflict, is a picture worthy of the pencil of an artist.”†

* Reports of Generals Lee and D. H. Hill.

† Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 335.

The enemy again moved forward. General Hill had been able to collect but a few hundred men belonging to his scattered brigades, and with these under his immediate command, — the 27th North Carolina holding its ground bravely without a single cartridge * — he repulsed the Federal attack, and, aided by the artillery I have referred to, checked the progress of the enemy, and assumed so bold a front that the Federals withdrew. Had they pressed on there can be little doubt that the centre of the Confederate line would have been carried. They ventured upon another attack a little later, farther to the right, but this was quickly repulsed by Miller's battery, supported by a part of R. H. Anderson's division.

While the fight in the centre was going on, General Lee ordered General Jackson to endeavor to turn the enemy's right, and force it back across the Antietam. General Jackson at once moved off, but upon approaching the position held by Sumner, found that his line extended almost to the Potomac, and was powerfully defended by artillery, leaving no room between the river, which, in that direction makes a remarkable bend, and the left of the Federal line for a turning movement, so that any attack would of necessity have to be made in front. General Jackson, in consideration of this and of the weakness of his force, concluded to refrain from any hostile demonstration. It was well that he did not attack, for Sumner had been reinforced by Franklin's corps. General Franklin was anxious to advance, but was kept inactive by General Sumner who did not desire to encounter Jackson again that day.

The attack upon the centre ceased about two o'clock, and from this time there was a lull in the operations, broken only by "artillery duels" of the armies.

General McClellan had massed a column of fifteen thousand men, under General Burnside, on his left, in front of the lower

* General Lee's Report.

stone bridge, and opposite the position of General Longstreet. With this corps (the 9th) McClellan designed forcing the passage of the Stone Bridge, and assaulting the Confederate right as soon as the attack on Lee's left should be successfully developed. After carrying the bridge, General Burnside was to drive the Confederates from the heights in the vicinity of Sharpsburg, and take possession of the turnpike. This would cut Lee off from Shepherdstown, and would put him to great loss, if it did not ruin him. It was designed that General Burnside should make his attack early in the morning. When it was found that the Confederate resistance on his left was more stubborn than had been anticipated, General Burnside was ordered, by General McClellan, to attack and carry the bridge, and move upon Sharpsburg at once, as the surest means of assisting Hooker. During the day General Burnside made several attempts to pass the bridge, but was each time foiled by the Confederates.

The necessities of the left wing had forced General Lee, early in the day, to send to General Jackson the commands of Hood, Walker, and McLaws, leaving to General Longstreet the single division of General D. R. Jones. This command numbered barely twenty-five hundred men, and was the only force that could be spared to defend the right against the powerful corps of General Burnside. The force immediately in front of the bridge, and charged with its defence, was the brigade of General Toombs, four hundred strong.* Yet this handful was sufficient to hold General Burnside in check during the greater portion of the day.

About four o'clock, however, Burnside, who had been constantly receiving orders from McClellan to move forward, made a rush for the bridge and drove back Toombs' brigade, almost running over it. Pressing on, he reached the crest held by

* Report of General D. R. Jones.

General Jones' main column. A brief but stubborn resistance was made by Jones' troops, but they were beaten back, and Burnside seemed about to seize the victory even at this late hour.

Just at this time A. P. Hill arrived from Harper's Ferry with his division, having been on the march since half past seven in the morning. Reporting to General Lee in person, he was ordered to move to General Jones' assistance. His division was only two thousand strong.* As he reached the right wing Jones was retiring, having been forced to leave a battery of four guns in the hands of the enemy. Hill promptly united the retreating division with his own, — in all less than five thousand men, — and then, hurling them with resistless energy upon the victorious enemy, drove Burnside's corps rapidly before him, recapturing the battery and the ground that had been lost, and forcing the enemy to take refuge under the ridge bordering the Antietam, where they were protected by their batteries on the other side of the creek.

Thus ended this great battle, and at sunset the Confederates remained upon the ground they had occupied in the morning, having repulsed every effort made to dislodge them. They suffered a loss in killed and wounded of about eight thousand seven hundred and ninety men, including Generals Starke and Branch killed, General G. B. Anderson, mortally wounded, and Generals R. H. Anderson, Ripley, Lawton, Wright, and Armistead wounded. The Federal loss was twelve thousand four hundred and sixty-nine, including General Mansfield mortally wounded, and Generals Hooker, Hartsuff, Duryee, Richardson, Sedgewick, French, Sumner, Dana, Meagher, Ricketts, Weber, and Rodman wounded.

It was almost dark when Burnside was repulsed. The enemy expecting that Lee would try to follow up his success by

* General A. P. Hill's Report.

crossing the creek, massed their artillery on the heights commanding the bridges. General Lee had no intention of pushing on so far. He had foiled them in all their efforts, and this was a great triumph with so small an army as he had.

During the night, some slight reënforcements were received by the Confederate army, consisting chiefly of soldiers, who had been sick or wounded earlier in the year, and were now rejoining their regiments, and of stragglers who were constantly coming in, but these fell far short of making up the losses in battle.

On the morning of the 18th, General McClellan had before him the alternatives of renewing the attack at once or deferring it until the next day, when he expected reënforcements, then on their way from Washington. He decided to adopt the latter, although there was considerable probability that General Lee would retire into Virginia before the morning of the 19th.

During the 18th the Confederate army occupied the position held on the previous day, except in the centre, where the line was drawn in about two hundred yards. Although not strong enough to assume the offensive, General Lee regarded his ability to repel another attack as certain, and held his lines during the day without apprehension.*

V.

THE RETREAT ACROSS THE POTOMAC.

The battle of Sharpsburg was not a victory for General McClellan. He had attacked an army scarcely more than one-third as strong as his own, and had been repulsed with a loss one-third greater than that experienced by his antagonist. So

* General Lee's Report.

severely had his army suffered from the handling it had received, that it is certain it would have been driven back east of the mountains had the thirty thousand stragglers of Lee's army been present on the 17th of September. It is true that the invasion of Maryland came to a close with this engagement, but not, as has been asserted, in consequence of it. The delay caused by the retention of Harper's Ferry by the enemy, and above all the terrible losses sustained by the Southern army through the straggling of the men, had so completely disarranged General Lee's programme as to make a successful campaign in Maryland no longer possible. The campaign was in reality decided before the battle was fought, and the action was awaited by General Lee simply to put an end to McClellan's pursuit and secure the reunion of the army.

On the night of the 18th it was decided by General Lee to retire into Virginia at once. He had nothing to gain by waiting in his present position, and he was only increasing his danger by continuing in Maryland. It was known to him that General McClellan was receiving reënforcements. He could not hope for any addition to his army, and his communications with the south bank of the Potomac were maintained by a single road, which was in such a condition that it was almost impossible to supply the troops with food and ammunition. By retiring into Virginia he could recruit his forces by collecting the stragglers from his army. The sick and wounded of the Peninsular campaign were now beginning to return to their regiments fresh and ready for active service, and the Government was collecting reënforcements for the army, all of whom could join it more readily in Virginia than in Maryland. The wants of the men in clothing, shoes and provisions could be better supplied south of the Potomac than north of it.

On the night of the 18th, General Longstreet, whose position was only a few miles north of the Potomac, withdrew qui-

etly, and recrossed the river near Shepherdstown. He was followed by the rest of the army, the cavalry bringing up the rear, and by eleven o'clock on the morning of the 19th the army was in position on the Virginia shore, ready to receive the enemy should they attempt to pursue. Everything of value was brought off. The New York Tribune well expressed the feeling of disappointment which pervaded the North when the masterly withdrawal of the Southern commander became known. "He leaves us," it said, "the debris of his late camps, two disabled pieces of artillery, a few hundred of his stragglers, perhaps two thousand of his wounded, and as many more of his unburied dead. Not a sound field-piece, caisson, ambulance, or wagon: not a tent, box of stores, or a pound of ammunition. He takes with him the supplies gathered in Maryland, and the rich spoils of Harper's Ferry."

When he discovered the withdrawal of General Lee, on the morning of the 19th, General McClellan pushed forward Porter's corps, which had been held in reserve during the battle of the 17th, and moved towards the Potomac in pursuit of General Lee. Porter reached the north bank just after the Confederates had crossed the river.

General Pendleton was left to guard the ford with the reserve artillery and about six hundred infantry. During the night Porter crossed a strong column, and, driving off the infantry, captured four of Pendleton's guns. General Porter then established a considerable force on the south bank, under the fire of his artillery on the Maryland shore.

The army had withdrawn from the river before this occurred, but as soon as he was informed of Pendleton's misfortune, General Lee ordered General A. P. Hill to return with his division, and drive Porter over the river. On the morning of the 20th Hill moved back, and approaching the enemy's position, under a heavy fire from their batteries in Maryland, drove them into

the Potomac,* where an appalling scene of destruction of human life followed. Two hundred prisoners were taken. "The broad surface of the Potomac was blue with the floating bodies of the Federals. But few escaped to tell the tale. By their own account, they lost three thousand men, killed and drowned, from one brigade alone."† Hill's loss was two hundred and sixty-one.

General McClellan attempted no further pursuit. He was as much in need of rest for his army as was Lee, and he was glad to remain north of the Potomac, while the Confederate army withdrew to the vicinity of Winchester.

The army greatly needed rest. Since the 25th of June it had marched over three hundred miles on half rations, in rags and barefooted. It had met and defeated three powerful armies in twelve battles and numerous skirmishes, inflicting upon the enemy a loss of nearly seventy-six thousand men, of which number nearly thirty thousand were prisoners, capturing one hundred and fifty-five pieces of artillery, nearly seventy thousand stand of small arms, and capturing and destroying stores of various kinds to the amount of millions of dollars.

While the troops were lying around Winchester, General Lee issued the following order, reviewing the events of the campaign:—

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 2, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 116.

"In reviewing the achievements of the army during the present campaign, the Commanding General cannot withhold the expression of his admiration of the indomitable courage it has displayed in battle, and its cheerful endurance of privation and hardship on the march.

* General Jackson's Report.

† General A. P. Hill's Report.

“ Since your great victories around Richmond, you have defeated the enemy at Cedar Mountain, expelled him from the Rappahannock, and, after a conflict of three days, utterly repulsed him on the Plains of Manassas, and forced him to take shelter within the fortifications around his Capital.

“ Without halting for repose, you crossed the Potomac, stormed the heights of Harper’s Ferry, made prisoners of more than eleven thousand men, and captured upwards of seventy pieces of artillery, all their small arms, and other munitions of war.

“ While one corps of the army was thus engaged, the other insured its success by arresting, at Boonsboro, the combined armies of the enemy, advancing under their favorite General to the relief of their beleaguered comrades.

“ On the field of Sharpsburg, with less than one third his numbers, you resisted, from daylight until dark, the whole army of the enemy, and repulsed every attack along his entire front, of more than four miles in extent.

“ The whole of the following day you stood prepared to resume the conflict on the same ground, and retired next morning, without molestation, across the Potomac.

“ Two attempts, subsequently made by the enemy, to follow you across the river, have resulted in his complete discomfiture, each being driven back with loss.

“ Achievements such as these demanded much valor and patriotism. History records few examples of greater fortitude and endurance than this army has exhibited; and I am commissioned by the President to thank you in the name of the Confederate States for the undying fame you have won for their arms.

“ Much as you have done, much more remains to be accomplished. The enemy again threatens us with invasion, and to your tried valor and patriotism the country looks with confi-

dence for deliverance and safety. Your past exploits give assurance that this confidence is not misplaced.

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

VI.

A SEASON OF REST.

After reaching the vicinity of Winchester, General Lee's first care was to urge upon the Government the necessity of supplying his troops with shoes and clothing. These wants were supplied only in part. The Quartermaster-General's Department seemed to be very indignant that the troops should want either shoes or clothing. It could not bring itself to act with the energy the case demanded, and the citizens of Richmond and Petersburg, indignant at the delay of the Government, sent a large quantity of shoes to the army, while the Quartermaster-General was considering whether the army regulations allowed a soldier to wear new shoes.

The stragglers were collected and brought back to the army. They were scattered all through the country between Shepherds-town and Manassas, and having had the advantage of a long rest, were in good condition when they reached Winchester. The work of preparing the command for a new campaign went on rapidly, and in the course of a fortnight the army was increased by the arrival of about thirty thousand fresh troops. The country was admirably adapted for restoring the worn-out men to vigor and health again. "The bracing mountain breeze, the beautiful skies, the liberty to engage in every species of fun and frolic, within the limits of military discipline, seemed to pour new life-blood into the frames of the men, exhausted and worn down by the immense marches they had

made, and the toils, privations, hardships, and excitements which they had undergone."

The holiday life, as it were, of the men is well described in the following letter written by one of Jackson's corps at the time :

"The campaign having apparently ended, there are no 'moving accidents by flood or field' of interest, and therefore nothing left to record but the daily routine of camp life; this shall be true to history, however, to let the old folks at home know how we live 'sure enough' while here. * * * Our camps not being regulated by military rule, for want of material in tents, etc., are left to illustrate the variegated, architectural, and domestic tastes of the thousand different individuals concerned. Hence, although a wall tent or Sibley, graces an occasional locality, the most of the men ensconce themselves in bush-built shelters of various shapes, in fence corners, under gum blankets, eked out by cedar boughs, or burrow semi-subterraneously like Esquimaux. If, as is said, the several styles of architecture took their origin from natural circumstances, and climate, etc., as the curving Oriental roofs from the long reeds originally in use — the slanting Egyptians from the necessity of baking their unburnt bricks in the hot sun — the Corinthian from its own flowery clime, etc., etc., — an architectural genius might find enough original designs in this camp to supply a century to come.

"The only 'useful occupation' of this brigade for some time past has been to destroy all the railroads in reach; apparently, too, for no better reason than the fellow had for killing the splendid anaconda in the Museum, because it was his 'rule to kill snakes wherever found.' * * *

"It is when idle in camp that the soldier is a great institution, yet one that must be seen to be appreciated. Pen cannot fully paint the air of cheerful content, care-hilarity, irrespon-

sible loungings, and practical spirit of jesting that ‘obtains,’ ready to seize on any odd circumstance in its licensed levity. A ‘cavalryman’ comes rejoicing in immense top boots, for which in fond pride he has invested full forty dollars of pay; at once the cry from a hundred voices follows him along the line: ‘Come up out o’ them boots! Come out! Too soon to go into winter quarters! I know you’re in thar!—see your arms stickin’ out!’ A bumpkin rides by in an uncommonly big hat, and is frightened by the shout: ‘Come down out o’ that hat! Come down! ’Taint no use to say you aint up there; I see your legs hanging out!’ A fancy staff officer was horrified at the irreverent reception of his nicely twisted moustache, as he heard from behind innumerable trees: ‘Take them nice out o’ your mouth! Take ’em out! No use to say they aint thar!—see their tails hanging out!’ Another, sporting immense whiskers, was urged to ‘come out of that bunch of har! I know you’re in thar! I see your ears a working!’ Sometimes a rousing cheer is heard in the distance—it is explained: ‘Boys, look out! Here comes “Old Stonewall,” or an old hare, one or t’other,’—they being about the only individuals who invariably bring down the house.

“But the whole day of camp life is not yet described; the night remains, and latterly it is no unusual scene, as the gloaming gathers, to see a group quietly collect beneath the dusky shadows of the forest trees,—‘God’s first temples,’—whence soon arise the notes of some familiar hymn, awaking memories of childhood and of home. The youthful chaplain in earnest tones tells his holy mission; another hymn is heard, and by the waning light of the pine torches the weird-like figures of the grouped soldiers are seen reverently moving to the night’s repose. The deep bass drum beats taps—the sounds die out in all the camps, save at times the sweet strains from the band of the 5th Stonewall regiment in a neighboring grove, till they too fade away into the silly night, and soon—

—“The soldiers lie peacefully dreaming,
Their tents in the rays of the clear Autumn moon,
Or the light of the watch-fires are gleaming;
A tremulous sigh as the gentle night wind
Through the forest leaves slowly is creeping,
While the stars up above with their glittering eyes
Keep guard, for the army is sleeping.”

The experience of the past campaigns had by this time suggested to the Confederate authorities the propriety of organizing *Corps d'Armée* for their principal armies.

On the 6th of October the President approved an act of Congress authorizing him to organize “the divisions of the provisional army of the Confederate States into army corps, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint officers to the command thereof.” The act was put into operation immediately throughout the South. The Army of Northern Virginia was divided into two corps, and the command of the first assigned to Major-General Longstreet and that of the second to Major-General Jackson. Longstreet's corps consisted of the divisions of McLaws, Hood, Pickett, and Walker; Jackson's of the divisions of A. P. Hill, Ewell, and Jackson's old division, under General Taliaferro. The command of the reserve was assigned to General D. H. Hill, the cavalry continued under General Stuart, and the artillery under General Pendleton. This army numbered about fifty-five or sixty thousand men towards the last of October.

The armies of the South now began to suffer from one of the consequences of their lack of discipline. Desertions became frightfully common. The losses of the Army of Northern Virginia necessarily occasioned the absence of many sick and wounded. The majority of these were sent to Richmond, Petersburg and Lynchburg, and the hospital facilities of the South were so limited that it became necessary to allow many of the patients to go to their homes during their convalescence,

and the most of those who remained in the hospitals until well enough to move about were allowed brief furloughs at the end of that time, in order that they might recuperate more speedily than was possible in the hospitals. Many, alas, too many, of these men failed to return to the service at the expiration of their leaves of absence, and others, with a strange idea that they were serving the country, refused to return to their proper commands, but enlisted in other regiments. Measures were set on foot to check the evil, but, through the weakness of the Government, failed to accomplish anything.

Congress also passed a law for the removal of incompetent officers from the army, which was approved by the President October 13, 1862. Had this measure been faithfully executed, it would have resulted in the greatest benefit to the Confederacy, but Mr. Davis, from the first, in effect, set himself against it. No officer, however incompetent, who chanced to be a friend of the President, was in any danger of suffering by this law, for Mr. Davis, throughout the whole struggle, constituted himself the especial protector of incompetent and unpopular officers and commanders.*

The army was not only called upon to bear privations and hardships, but it was for months together kept from receiving the miserable pittance of Confederate money allowed it. The law of Congress required that the troops should be paid in such a manner that the arrears should at no time exceed two months. The organization of the Confederate army gave a paymaster to each regiment by requiring the duties of that position to be discharged by the regimental quartermasters. These officers confined their depredations and speculations to the stores and property belonging to their department, and satisfied their consciences by a rigid discharge of their duties as paymasters, so

* Witness his course with reference to Pemberton, Northrop, Hindman, Seddon, and others.

that they were not responsible for the failure of the troops to receive the money due them. The fault was with the Treasury Department, which, to the great injury of the South, was in charge of Secretary Memminger. He failed to provide the funds, although he knew the army was suffering for them. He had been assigned a task far beyond his capacity, and the army and people had to pay the penalty of his blunders. Even when the payments were made, the money was so worthless that a month's pay would not buy a pair of shoes. The Government was frequently urged to make the treasury notes a legal tender, and among those who advocated the measure was General Lee, who, in a letter written about the 20th of October, 1862, called the attention of the President to its propriety and necessity, and quoted the example of Washington during the Revolution in support of his views.*

The facilities for caring for the sick and wounded of the army were very limited, but the incompetency of many members of the medical department, and the inexcusable carelessness of too many of the persons connected with it, occasioned great suffering to the patients. This was especially the case while the army was at Winchester. The injured men had to be conveyed from that place to Staunton, a distance of ninety miles, in ambulances, — always a painful way of travelling, — and along the whole route no accommodations were made for their comfort, though it was a two days' journey for them. Upon reaching Staunton they were crowded into box cars, for fear they would injure the passenger coaches, and, as a general rule, with nothing to support them against the jolting and shaking of the cars but the hard, plank floor. The surgeons and attendants were generally assigned a separate car, — a comfortable coach with softly-cushioned seats, — and they rarely saw

* Diary of a Rebel War Clerk. Vol. I. See entry under the date of October 22, 1862.

their patients during the journey. The writer of these pages witnessed much of this during the war, and knew of many well-authenticated instances of terrible suffering endured by the wounded during their journeys in the box-cars. Sometimes these journeys would occupy ten or twelve hours, during which time the men were not given any food, or one drop of water to quench their burning thirst. Their sufferings were intense, and commonly aggravated by the heat of the close cars. Still the Medical Department of the Government could not find the means to remedy this evil, and the Government itself could not, amidst all its violations of the Constitution and the rights of the people, find it in its heart to require the railroad companies to allow the wounded to use the passenger coaches, which would have spared the poor fellows many hours of untold agony.*

The Confederate Government, alarmed by the movements of the Federals, and the energetic preparations being made by them for the fall campaign, urged General Lee to fall back from the Valley. This, however, was not in accordance with the views of the Confederate commander. In a letter to the Government, he stated that he was strong enough to resist McClellan's advance, should he move down the Valley, and that in his present position he was subsisting his army on what would supply the enemy should he retreat, as his own means of transportation were too limited to permit him to carry away much of it, and instead of thinking of retreating, he urged that the Confederate cavalry in the neighborhood of Manassas and Culpepper should be more active and daring.

As a means of increasing his own army, and working upon the fears of the Federal Government, so as to induce them to draw off troops from McClellan's army, or delay his advance

* The reader will find statements of these abuses in the *Richmond Examiner* for October 18, 1862, and the *Richmond Dispatch* for October 17 and 20, 1862.

into Virginia, General Lee ordered General Loring, who was operating in Western Virginia, with about eight thousand men, to march towards the Ohio, menace Wheeling, and then join the Army of Northern Virginia on the Upper Potomac by way of the Monongehela. General Loring, who, throughout the war seemed to have a supreme disregard for the orders of his superiors, refused to obey General Lee's instructions, and the plan fell to the ground. General Loring was removed from his command, but the Government declined to allow General Lee to reënforce his army with the troops from Western Virginia.

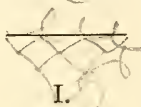
So deeply wedded to its policy of dispersion was the Southern Administration, that, when, towards the last of October, the enemy made their appearance on the south side of the James, the Government, instead of withdrawing troops from unimportant points to meet this demonstration, absolutely requested General Lee to detach a part of his army for service south of the James. This, too, when McClellan was threatening an immediate advance into Virginia. General Lee very properly declined to comply with the request, stating that if any of his troops were taken from him he would not have enough left to meet McClellan.

The period of rest was rapidly drawing to a close, and the army was again about to be called upon to meet its old antagonist.

VI.

THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN.

OCTOBER — DECEMBER, 1862.



(MCCLELLAN ADVANCES.)

WHEN the Army of Northern Virginia retired to the vicinity of Winchester, General Jackson's corps was assigned the task of destroying the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This important road was the principal line of communication between the east and west, and had been used to great advantage by the enemy. General Lee now determined to damage it to such an extent that it would require a long time for the Federals to repair it. During the month of October that portion of the railroad extending from Sir John's Run to within a few miles of Harper's Ferry, a distance of forty miles, was completely destroyed, — the rails and sleepers removed, twisted, and burned, and the bridges and culverts blown up.

After the withdrawal of Lee's army, General McClellan occupied the north bank of the Potomac, from a point opposite Shepherdstown to Harper's Ferry. Two corps, under General Sumner, occupied Harper's Ferry and the surrounding heights, and ponton-bridges were thrown across the Potomac and Shenandoah at their confluence. General McClellan passed the

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VI.

THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN.

OCTOBER — DECEMBER, 1862.



I.

McCLELLAN ADVANCES.

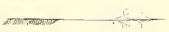
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MAP OF THE COUNTRY BETWEEN RICHMOND & PETERSBURG

Drawn from Surveys made by Order of
Maj Gen J. F. GILMER
Chief Engineer C. S. A.

Scale of Miles



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time occupied by Lee in reorganizing and refitting his army, in a similar manner, and with ten times more advantages in the way of supplies of all kinds. He applied all his energies to the task of preparing his command for another grand campaign against the Southern Capital.

During this time very little of importance occurred. On the 1st of October a strong column of cavalry, under General Pleasanton, crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown, for the purpose of reconnoitering General Lee's position. The small Confederate force at Martinsburg was driven off, and the enemy pressed on through the town, when their advance was checked by General Stuart, who arrived on the ground and took command in person. Though the horses were nearly exhausted, Stuart made a gallant attack, and at nightfall forced General Pleasanton to recross the Potomac.*

* The Federals reported this affair as a victory. General Lee's dispatch shows the true state of the case. It is as follows :—

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
CAMP ON WASHINGTON'S RUN, Oct. 2, 1862.

“GENERAL S. COOPER, *Adjutant and Inspector-General, C. S. A., Richmond, Va.*

“GENERAL :— The enemy's cavalry, under General Pleasanton, with six pieces of artillery, drove back our pickets yesterday, in front of Shepherdstown. The 9th Virginia cavalry, which was on picket, repulsed the enemy several times, by vigorous charges, disputing the ground step by step, back to the main body. By the time his artillery reached him, Colonel W. H. F. Lee, who was in command of the brigade, was obliged to place it on the west bank of the Opequon, on the flank of the enemy as he approached Martinsburg.

“General Hampton's brigade retired through Martinsburg, on the Tuscarora road, when General Stuart arrived and made dispositions to attack. Lee's brigade was advanced immediately, and Hampton's ordered forward. The enemy retired at the approach of Lee along the Shepherdstown road, and was driven across the Potomac by the cavalry, with a severe loss, and darkness alone prevented it from being a signal victory. His rear was overtaken and put to flight, our cavalry charging in gallant style under a severe fire of artillery, routing squadron after squadron, killing a number, wounding more,

In order to learn something of the movements, position, and strength of the Federal army, General Lee decided to send General Stuart on an expedition to Pennsylvania, and on the 8th of October ordered him to set out at once.*

and capturing several. He was driven through Shepherdstown, and crossed the river after dark, in no case standing a hand-to-hand conflict, but relying upon his artillery and carbines at long range for protection.

"I regret to add that we lost one lieutenant and several privates.

"I am, most respectfully your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

*The purpose of this expedition is stated fully in the following letter of instructions :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
CAMP NEAR WINCHESTER, VA., Oct. 8, 1862.

"MAJOR-GENERAL J. E. B. STUART, *Commanding Cavalry, &c.*

"GENERAL: An expedition into Maryland with a detachment of cavalry, if it can be successfully executed, is at this time desirable. You will, therefore, form a detachment of from twelve to fifteen hundred well mounted men, suitable for such an expedition, and should the information from your scouts lead you to suppose that your movement can be concealed from the bodies of the enemy that would be able to resist it, you are desired to cross the Potomac above Williamsport, leave Hagerstown and Greencastle on your right, and proceed to the rear of Chambersburg, and endeavor to destroy the railroad bridge over the branch of the Conococheague.

"Any other damage you can inflict upon the enemy or his means of transportation you will also execute. You are desired to gain all information of the position, force, and probable intention of the enemy which you can; and in your progress into Pennsylvania, you will take measures to inform yourself of the various routes that you may take on your return to Virginia.

"To keep your movement secret, it will be necessary for you to arrest all citizens that may give information to the enemy and should you meet with citizens of Pennsylvania holding State or Government offices, it will be desirable, if convenient, to bring them with you that they may be used as hostages, or the means of exchanges for our own citizens that have been carried off by the enemy. Such persons will, of course, be treated with all the respect and consideration that circumstances will admit.

"Should it be in your power to supply yourself with horses, or other necessary articles on the list of legal captures, you are authorized to do so.

"Having accomplished your errand, you will rejoin this army as soon as

On the 9th of October General Stuart organized a force of eighteen hundred men and four pieces of artillery, under the command of General Hampton, and Colonels W. H. F. Lee and Jones. His men were ordered to conduct themselves with great prudence and propriety during the march, and to confine themselves strictly to the objects of the expedition.* At noon

practicable. Reliance is placed upon your skill and judgment in the successful execution of this plan, and it is not intended or desired that you should jeopardize the safety of your command, or go farther than your good judgment and prudence may dictate.

"Colonel Imboden has been desired to attract the attention of the enemy towards Cumberland; so that the river between that point and where you may re-cross, may be less guarded. You will, of course, keep out your scouts to give you information, and take every other precaution to secure the success and safety of the expedition.

"Should you be led so far east, as to make it better, in your opinion, to continue around to the Potomac, you will have to cross the river in the vicinity of Leesburg.

"I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General*.

Official:

R. H. CHILTON, *A. A. General*."

* The following is General Stuart's order.

"HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY DIVISION,
October 9, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 13.

"During the expedition into the enemy's country, in which this command is about to engage, brigade commanders will make arrangements for seizing horses, the property of citizens of the United States, and all other property subject to legal capture, provided that in no case will any species of property be taken except by authority given in person or in writing of the commander of brigade, regiment, or captain of a company in the absence of his superior officers. In all cases, a simple receipt will be given to the effect that the article is seized for the use of the Confederate States, giving place, date and name of owners, in order to enable the individual to have recourse upon his Government for damage.

"Individual plunder for private use is positively forbidden, and every instance must be punished in the severest manner, for an army of plunderers

on the 9th, the command rendezvoused at Darkesville, and marched thence to Hedgesville, where it bivouacked for the night. At daylight on the 10th the march was resumed, and the Potomac was crossed at McCoy's, between Hancock and Williamsport. The enemy had a picket at this point which was driven off with the loss of several horses.

Upon gaining the National road, the cavalry surprised and captured a party of eight or ten men in charge of a signal station, together with their flags and apparatus. From these Stuart learned that a large force of the enemy had passed by but an hour before, towards Cumberland.

consummates its own destruction. The capture of anything will not give the captor any individual claim, and all horses and equipments will be kept to be apportioned, upon the return of the expedition, through the entire division. Brigade commanders will arrange to have one-third of their respective commands engaged in leading horses, provided enough can be procured, each man linking so as to lead three horses, the led horses being habitually in the centre of the brigade, and the remaining two-thirds, will keep, at all times, prepared for action.

"The attack, when made, must be vigorous and overwhelming, giving the enemy no time to reconnoitre or consider anything, except his best means of flight. All persons found in transit must be detained, subject to the orders of Division Provost Marshal, to prevent information reaching the enemy. As a measure of justice to our many good citizens, who, without crime, have been taken from their homes and kept by the enemy in prison, all public functionaries, such as magistrates, postmasters, sheriffs, &c., will be seized as prisoners. They will be kindly treated, and kept as hostages for our own. No straggling from the route of march or bivouac for the purpose of obtaining provisions, &c., will be permitted in any case, the commissaries and quartermasters being required to obtain and furnish all such supplies in bulk as may be necessary.

"So much of this order as authorizes seizures of persons and property, will not take effect until the command crosses the Pennsylvania line.

"The utmost activity is enjoined upon the detachments procuring horses, and unceasing vigilance upon the entire command.

"Major J. P. W. Hairston is hereby appointed Division Provost Marshal.
By command of Major-General J. E. B. STUART.

R. CHANNING PRICE, 1st *Lieut. and A. D. C.*"

General Stuart was exceedingly anxious to capture Hagerstown, where the Federals had collected a large quantity of valuable stores, but he was satisfied, from information which reached him, that the enemy had become aware of his presence in their lines, so that, by striking at Hagerstown, he might ruin his expedition. Time was now all important, and the column was pushed forward as rapidly as possible.

At dark the cavalry arrived at Chambersburg, having met with no resistance along their route. It was not known to General Stuart what force the enemy had in the place, but he did not think it prudent to defer its capture until daylight. At the same time he was unwilling to dash into a town full of women, and children, without giving them a chance to secure their safety. Accordingly, he dispatched a summons to the authorities of Chambersburg, demanding the surrender of the town, and informing them that if any resistance was offered, "the place would be shelled in three minutes." The officer who bore the summons could not find any officials, either civic or military, but delivered the message to several prominent citizens of the place.

Hampton's command was in the advance, and this at once moved into the town and occupied it. The authorities had all fled, and "no one could be found willing to acknowledge that he held office in the place."* The inhabitants were assured that if they remained at their homes in peace they would be protected. This pledge was scrupulously observed. A Colonel McClure, in his account of Stuart's occupation of the town, where the Colonel himself resided, thus describes the conduct of the Confederates :

"A subordinate officer had begged of me a little bread for himself and a few more, and he was supplied in the kitchen. He was followed by others in turn, until nearly a hundred had

* General Stuart's Report.

been supplied with something to eat or drink. All, however, politely asked permission to enter the house. When told I was a decided Republican they thanked me for being candid. * * * "In a little while one entered the yard, and, after a profound bow, asked for a few coals to light a fire. * * * I pointed them to the pump, and again received a profusion of thanks. Communication having been opened between us, squads followed each other closely for water, but each called and asked permission before getting it, and promptly left the yard. I was somewhat surprised at this uniform courtesy. About one o'clock half a dozen officers came to the door and asked to have some coffee made for them, offering to pay liberally for it in Confederate scrip. After concluding a treaty with them on behalf of the colored servants, coffee was promised them, and they then asked for a little bread with it. They were wet and shivering, and seeing a bright, open wood fire in the library, they asked permission to enter and warm themselves until their coffee should be ready, assuring me that, under no circumstances, should anything in the house be disturbed by their men."*

* This contrasts glaringly with the conduct of the Federals during their occupation of Williamstown, North Carolina.

"On entering Williamstown," says an eye-witness, "the Yankees respected not a single house, it mattered not whether the owner was in or absent. Doors were broken open and houses entered by the soldiers, who took everything they saw, and what they were unable to carry away they broke and destroyed. Furniture of every description was committed to the flames, and the citizens who dared to remonstrate with them were threatened, cursed, and buffeted about. * * * The enemy stopped for the night at Mr. Ward's mill. Mr. Ward was completely stripped of everything, they not even leaving him enough for breakfast. While on a sick bed, his wife was, in his presence, searched and robbed of five hundred dollars. The Yankees went about fifteen miles above Hamilton, when, for some cause, they suddenly turned and marched back, taking, with some slight deviation in quest of plunder, the same route they had come. The town of Hamilton was set on fire and as many as fifteen houses laid in ashes. During the time the Yan-

About two hundred and seventy-five sick soldiers were captured in a hospital in the place. They were paroled, and allowed to remain undisturbed. The next morning, the 11th, a large quantity of muskets, pistols, sabres, and ammunition, (about five thousand stand of arms in all) was destroyed, the railroad and telegraph wires were cut, and the railroad depot, machine shops, and several trains of loaded cars were burnt.

The enemy had now learned of Stuart's movements, and the news was telegraphed throughout the North, producing no little excitement and mortification there. General McClellan determined that the bold troopers should not escape him this time, as they had done on the Chickahominy, and at once disposed his troops to prevent them from recrossing the Potomac. General Pleasanton, with his cavalry, was ordered to proceed in pursuit of Stuart. He was directed to march with the utmost rapidity, and "not to spare his men or horses" in the attempt to capture or destroy the Confederate horsemen.

kees encamped at Williamstown, everything which they left unharmed when last there, was demolished. Every house in town was occupied and defaced. Several fine residences, among which was Judge Briggs', were actually used as horse stables. Iron safes were broken open, and in the presence of their owners rifled of their contents. Several citizens were seized and robbed of the money on their persons. * * * * * On Sunday morning Williamstown was fired and no effort made to arrest the flames until several houses were burnt. No attempt was made by the Yankee officers, from General Foster down, to prevent the destruction of property. On the contrary, they connived at it, and some of the privates did not hesitate to say that they were instructed to do as they had done. Two ladies at Williamstown went to General Foster to beseech protection from his soldiers, and were rudely and arrogantly ordered from his presence. * * * * * Families who fled in dismay at the approach of the invader, returned and found, as well as the few who remained at home, clothes, beds, bedding, spoons, and books, abstracted, costly furniture, crockery, doors, harness and vehicles demolished, locks, windows, and mirrors broken; fences burned; corn, potatoes, and peas gathered from the barns and fields consumed; iron safes dug to pieces and thrown out of doors, and their contents stolen."—*Richmond Examiner*, November 26, 1862.

General Averill, then at Green Spring, on the Upper Potomac, was also directed to move in pursuit. General Crook, who was at Hancock, en route for Western Virginia, was instructed to embark his division on the cars, and be in readiness to move to any point above Hancock, should Stuart attempt to cross in that direction. The commander at Harper's Ferry, was directed to keep a vigilant watch over the fords in his vicinity; General Burnside was to send two brigades on the cars to Monocacy Junction, to remain there without disembarking, with steam up, ready to move to any point on the railroad at which Stuart might be aiming. Colonel Rush, at Frederick, was to keep his lancers scouring the approaches from Chambersburg, in order to warn General Burnside of Stuart's arrival; and General Stoneman, whose headquarters were at Poolesville, guarding with his division the fords below the mouth of the Monocacy, was ordered to watch for Stuart, and prevent his crossing the river.*

"After these orders were given for covering all the fords upon the river," says General McClellan, "I did not think it possible for Stuart to recross, and I believed that the capture or destruction of his entire force was perfectly certain." Indeed it seemed so; but General Stuart was equal to the emergency.

He was ignorant, of course, of the fact that all of the Federal cavalry, and four or five divisions of infantry were trying to intercept him, but he was very certain that the division of General Crook, which he had missed so narrowly on his advance, would try to cut him off from the Upper Potomac, and, after mature deliberation, he determined to return by way of Leesburg, which was the most direct route.

Leaving Chambersburg on the morning of the 11th, General Stuart moved directly to Gettysburg, for the purpose of deceiving the inhabitants of the country as to his real destination.

* General McClellan's Report, pp. 408, 409.

After passing the Blue Ridge he retraced his steps, turned back towards Hagerstown for six or eight miles, and then marched rapidly through Emmettsburg, where he was received with enthusiasm by the inhabitants. Just before his arrival at this place, a party of Rush's Lancers, which had been sent out from Frederick to watch for him, passed by. Without halting, Stuart pushed on towards Frederick, and on the way captured a messenger with a dispatch from Colonel Rush, which, while it satisfied General Stuart that his locality was unknown to the enemy, gave him an idea of the arrangements that had been made to intercept him.

Meanwhile the Federal cavalry, under Averill and Pleasanton, were pushing on at the utmost speed, straining every nerve to overtake the Confederates, but Stuart, now warned of his danger, quickened his march, aiming straight for the Potomac. The Monocacy was crossed a short distance above Frederick, and the march was continued through the night, by way of Liberty, New Market, and Monrovia on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. By daylight on the 13th, the command was at Hyattstown, "on McClellan's line of wagon communication with Washington." Only a few wagons were captured, and the column pressed on to Barnesville, which had been vacated by a squadron of Federal cavalry but a short while before.

On the march General Stuart had learned something of the plan of General McClellan, besides what he gained from the dispatch from Colonel Rush. Now, however, the whole plan was revealed to him, and he was informed that a division of five thousand men was guarding the fords in his front. Believing that the boldest course was the safest, he determined to push right on to the Potomac, and, if necessary, cut his way through the enemy to the Virginia shore. He started at once for Poolesville, but arriving within two or three miles of it, turned

abruptly to the right, and, marching through the woods, gained the road leading from Poolesville to the mouth of the Monocacy.

In a few minutes after entering the road, the advanced squadron encountered the head of the column of General Pleasanton, which had just come up, moving towards Poolesville. General Stuart at once charged with this squadron, and drove the enemy's cavalry back upon their infantry, which now advanced to regain the ground lost by their cavalry. Instantly Lee's sharpshooters sprang from their horses, and engaged the Federal skirmishers, holding them in check until the artillery (one gun) in advance, came up. Pelham promptly opened his gun. Under the cover of this fire, and partly screened by the ridge which Pelham occupied, General Stuart moved the command to White's Ford, driving off, with the rest of his artillery, a force of about two hundred Federal infantry on the Virginia shore. Fortunately the canal was dry, and easily passed, and the column crossed over to the south side of the Potomac "with all the precision of passing a defile on drill." *

Just as Stuart reached the Virginia shore, the cavalry and infantry of General Stoneman arrived in hot haste from Poolesville. They were met with a sharp fire from Pelham's guns, now safely over the river, and prevented from crossing in pursuit. General Stuart retired from the river during the day, and rejoined the army at Winchester on the 14th.† His expedition

* General Stuart's Report.

† General Lee sent the following dispatch to Richmond, announcing Stuart's return:—

"WINCHESTER VA., Oct. 14, 1862.

"HON. G. W. RANDOLPH:

"The cavalry expedition to Pennsylvania has returned safe. They passed through Mercersburg, Chambersburg, Emmetsburg, Liberty, New Market, Hyattstown, and Burnesville. The expedition crossed the Potomac above Williamsport, and recrossed at White's Ford, making the entire circuit, cut-

was brilliant, and accomplished with the loss of only two or three men wounded, and two missing, who lost their way on the march. A large number of horses were collected and brought off in safety, and valuable information acquired respecting the disposition of McClellan's forces.

Besides this, the cavalry of Generals Pleasanton and Averill were so completely broken down by the arduous pursuit that their horses were unfit for further service, and the Federal army was compelled to delay its advance until a remount could be procured.*

During the expedition, General Stuart's column marched over eighty miles in twenty-four hours, and the pursuing force under General Pleasanton marched seventy-eight miles in the same time.

The army under General McClellan now numbered one hundred and ten thousand men present for duty.† The weather was admirably suited to offensive operations, and the Federal Government was anxious that so favorable a season for an advance should not be spent in idleness.

Two plans presented themselves to General McClellan. To move up the valley of the Shenandoah directly against Lee, or to enter Virginia east of the Blue Ridge, and endeavor to place his army between General Lee and Richmond. The latter plan was preferred by President Lincoln, and he promised General McClellan, in case he should adopt it, to reënforce him with thirty thousand men, which would give him an army of one hundred and forty thousand effective men. General McClellan preferred the line of the Shenandoah, as he feared that if he

ting the enemy's communications, destroying arms, &c., and obtaining many recruits.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

* General McClellan's Report, p. 408.

† General McClellan's Report, p. 422.

moved east of the mountains Lee would at once recross the Potomac into Maryland.* His advance, however, was delayed so long that this danger passed by. The fall rains generally destroy the fords of the Potomac, and they were so near at hand when the Federal army moved, that it was thought by General McClellan that Lee would not venture over the river so late in the season.† This fact, and the promise of heavy reënforcements, induced McClellan to decide upon entering Virginia east of the Blue Ridge.

His plan is thus stated in his report. "The plan of campaign I adopted during the advance, was to move the army well in hand parallel to the Blue Ridge, taking Warrenton as the point of direction for the main body; seizing each pass in the Blue Ridge by detachments, as we approached it, and guarding them after we had passed, as long as they would enable the enemy to trouble our communications with the Potomac. * * * We depended upon Harper's Ferry and Berlin for supplies until the Manassas Gap Railway was reached; when that occurred, the passes in our rear were to be abandoned, and the army massed ready for action or movement in any direction. It was my intention, if, upon reaching Ashby's or any other pass, I found that the enemy were in force between it and the Potomac, in the Valley of the Shenandoah, to move into the Valley and endeavor to gain their rear. I hardly hoped to accomplish this, but did expect that by striking in between Culpepper Court House and Little Washington, I could either separate their army and beat them in detail, or else force them to concentrate as far back as Gordonsville, and thus place the army of the Potomac in position either to adopt the Fredericksburg line of advance upon Richmond, or to be removed to the Peninsula, if,

* General McClellan's Report, p. 428.

† General McClellan's Report, p. 429.

as I apprehended, it were found impossible to supply it by the Orange and Alexandria Railroad beyond Culpepper.”*

Still, as the time passed on, and General McClellan did not move over the Potomac, President Lincoln sent him, through General Halleck, on the 6th of October, a peremptory order to advance. From this there was no appeal, and on the 26th of October, the Army of the Potomac commenced crossing into Virginia at Berlin, five miles below Harper's Ferry. By the second of November, the entire army was over the river.

II.

THE MOVEMENT TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

As soon as McClellan's advance was reported to him, General Lee put his army in motion. He detected the true nature of his adversary's movement, in spite of the effort made by McClellan to mask it by seizing the passes of the Blue Ridge, and he at once sent one division of Longstreet's corps to the vicinity of Upperville to watch the movements of the Federal army. Until he was more positive as to McClellan's intentions, he was not willing to move from the Valley. Jackson was sent to take position on the road between Berryville and Charlestown to check any advance of the enemy from Harper's Ferry, and prevent them from entering the Valley through the passes of the Blue Ridge, and the cavalry were ordered to co-operate with him.

Towards the last of October, the Federal army began to withdraw from the mountains and to move towards Warrenton. Longstreet's corps at once passed the Blue Ridge and took position at Culpepper Court House, which it reached about the 3d

* General McClellan's Report, pp. 435, 436.

of November. In order to delay the Federal army by exciting the fears of General McClellan for the safety of his rear, General Jackson was ordered to remain for some time near Millwood. He advanced one of his divisions to the east side of the Blue Ridge, and remained west of it with his main body. As soon as Longstreet moved to Culpepper, the cavalry were withdrawn from the Valley, and sent after him. The danger to which this separation of the two portions of the Confederate army exposed General Lee, was very great, and would have been rashness on the part of that commander, had not it been required by the necessities of the case. It is said that both General Lee and General Jackson were convinced of their ability to foil the designs of General McClellan, in spite of the risk attending a division of the army.*

The Federals gradually concentrated in the neighborhood of Warrenton. Their cavalry were thrown out towards Culpepper, and constant skirmishing occurred between them and the Southern cavalry, under General Stuart, with varied success. Stuart hung constantly around the enemy, watching vigilantly for some movement which would reveal their designs. The horses of Stuart's men were at this time in bad condition, the majority of them having the sore tongue and tender hoofs,† yet in spite of this, the service rendered by the gallant troopers was invaluable. Referring to this part of his army, General Lee says, in his report of the campaign, "Its vigilance, activity, and courage were conspicuous, and to its assistance is due, in a great measure, the success of some of the most important and delicate operations of the campaign."

About this time, while General Lee was awaiting the devel-

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 363.

† About the 12th of November General Lee stated to the War Department that *three fourths* of his cavalry horses had the sore tongue, and that their hoofs were falling off.

opment of his adversary's plan of operations, occurred an event which changed the entire programme of the enemy. On the 7th of November General McClellan, without any warning, was suddenly removed from the command of the Army of the Potomac. Various reasons have been given for this measure on the part of the Federal Government. It was undoubtedly a political act. It was believed by the Radical wing of the Republican party that General McClellan would be the next Conservative candidate for the Presidency of the Union, and it was thought by them a wise measure to remove him from a position in which he might add to his popularity with the army and people. Their plea was that he had not fulfilled the expectations of the Government. However much he may have left undone, there can be no doubt that General McClellan had done too much for his Government and country to merit such deep ingratitude from them. The measure was very acceptable to the South, and it put an end to the military career of the ablest commander the Army of the Potomac ever had.

The command of that army was assigned to Major-General Ambrose E. Burnside, its senior corps commander. General Burnside had seen considerable service since the commencement of the war, and his success on the Southern coast had given him a fair reputation in the North. He was an earnest, hard-working officer, but, while a good corps commander, was incapable of exercising successfully so important a trust. As the most intimate friend of General McClellan, he desired the continuance of that officer's presence at the head of the army, and when the command was offered to him, modestly protested that he did not want it, having already declined it twice before, and that he did not believe himself competent to lead such a large army.* It being the desire of the Government, how-

* Report on the Conduct of the War. General Burnside's Testimony. Vol. I, p. 650.

ever, that he should at least make the trial, General Burnside accepted the distinction tendered him. The manliness with which he sought to save General McClellan from his political enemies, and the modesty with which he met the tempting offer of his Government, were noble qualities in the new commander-in-chief, and contrast strikingly with the conduct of General Pope under similar circumstances.

The first measure of General Burnside was to reorganize his army. It consisted at that time of six *corps d'armée*. These he consolidated into three grand divisions, — the Right Grand Division, consisting of Couch's (2d) and Wilcox's (9th) corps, was assigned to General Sumner; the Centre Grand Division, consisting of Stoneman's (3d) and Butterfield's (5th) corps, was given to General Hooker; and the Left Grand Division, consisting of Reynolds' (1st) and W. F. Smith's (6th) corps, was given to General Franklin. This step was an error, inasmuch as it involved a halt of ten days at Warrenton, when time was all important to the Federal army. It was in reality too late to hope to make a successful campaign against Richmond during the remainder of the fall, for the season of bad weather and worse roads was at hand, when it would be impossible to carry on operations to any considerable extent. There was time, however, to strike a blow at the Army of Northern Virginia. Its two corps were divided by two marches, Jackson being still in the Valley, and this situation was one which would have tempted almost any energetic commander. It was General McClellan's intention to endeavor to profit by it when he was removed. General Burnside, however, decided not to strike a direct blow at Lee, but to march at once to Fredericksburg, and establish himself on the south bank of the Rappahannock before Lee could discover his design and interfere with it, and in this he committed another error.

He seems to have had no idea of using Fredericksburg as a base for an immediate advance upon Richmond, for he was opposed to an overland movement — but to have hoped by seizing it to secure an excellent place for passing the winter with his army, within easy reach of his supplies. He desired to postpone further operations until the spring, when he hoped to be permitted by his Government to embark his troops for a movement against Richmond from the south side of the James River.* He did not as yet impart these views to his Government, but simply proposed to change the line of operations to Fredericksburg. To this proposition Mr. Lincoln consented, and on the 15th of November, General Burnside commenced to move his army from Warrenton. His forces were to move along the north bank of the Rappahannock, to Falmouth, where by a ponton-bridge, which was to be forwarded from Washington, they would cross the river, and occupy the heights in the rear of Fredericksburg.

The movement of Burnside's army was promptly detected by General Stuart, and reported to General Lee. It would have been easy, had the Southern commander's force been stronger, to compel General Burnside to return to the line of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, but as this course would involve a general engagement between the two armies, General Lee decided to await the development of Burnside's intentions. A short time previous to this he had informed his Government that he had not men enough to risk a battle, and preferred manœuvring to doing so, adding that it was not his purpose to fight, unless Burnside exposed himself by some great blunder. As the enemy seemed to be moving in the direction of Fredericksburg, General Lee, on the 15th, reënforced the gar-

* For this explanation of General Burnside's intention I am indebted to the very able work of Mr. Swinton. See *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, p. 233.

rison of that place with a regiment of infantry and a battery of light artillery. On the 17th he learned that Sumner's corps had marched from Catlett's Station towards Falmouth, and that Aquia Creek had been occupied for two days by the Federal gunboats and transports. These tidings led him to believe that Fredericksburg was the destination of the Federal army, and he immediately despatched McLaws' and Ransom's divisions, of Longstreet's corps, accompanied by W. H. F. Lee's brigade of cavalry to that place. On the night of the 17th, he wrote to the War Department that Burnside seemed to be moving on Fredericksburg, and stated his purpose to follow the forces he had already sent there with the whole army as soon as the enemy's movement should be confirmed. He added, "Before the enemy's trains, can leave Fredericksburg" (for Richmond) "this army will be in position." General Jackson was ordered to withdraw at once from the Valley, and occupy Orange Court House.

In order to ascertain Burnside's movements more fully, General Stuart was directed to make a reconnoissance north of the Rappahannock. On the morning of the 18th, he forced a passage of the river at Warrenton Springs, "in the face of a regiment of cavalry and three pieces of artillery guarding the ford," and reached Warrenton shortly after the rear-guard of the enemy left it. The information thus obtained by General Stuart convinced General Lee that Burnside was really aiming at Fredericksburg, and on the morning of the 19th he marched with the remainder of Longstreet's corps for that place.

The advance of the Federal army was led by General Sumner, whose grand division arrived opposite Fredericksburg on the afternoon of the 17th of November. The town was at this time held by one regiment of infantry, four companies of cavalry, and a battery of artillery. General Sumner might have crossed the Rappahannock with ease, and have seized the

heights back of Fredericksburg before the arrival of Lee's army. He was very anxious to do this, but was prevented by orders from General Burnside, who was unwilling to attempt a passage of the river before the arrival of the rest of his army.*

As Sumner's troops appeared on the Stafford shore, they were opened upon by Lewis' battery from the heights above Fredericksburg. A Federal battery at once replied, and by its superior metal and skill soon silenced Lewis' guns. In obedience to his orders, Sumner halted opposite the town to await the arrival of the rest of the army. By the night of the 20th, the entire Federal force was concentrated in the neighborhood of Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg.

General Lee moved his troops rapidly, and by the 21st occupied the heights back of the town with Longstreet's corps, D. H. Hill's division, and the cavalry. Jackson's corps was at Orange Court House, and on the 26th of November it was ordered to rejoin the army in its new position.

III.

WAITING FOR BURNSIDE.

By refusing to allow Sumner to cross the river on his arrival at Falmouth, General Burnside lost his only chance for a successful occupation of the position he coveted, for when his whole army arrived on the north bank of the Rappahannock, it was only to find the enemy he had hoped to elude confronting him on the heights he had meant to seize, and ready to dispute with him the passage of the river. This being the case, there was nothing left for General Burnside, but to wait until he could establish his communications by way of Aquia Creek, and

* General Sumner's Evidence before Congressional Committee.

prepare his army for the grand assault on the new Southern line. He disposed his troops along the north bank of the river, from a point above Falmouth to the neighborhood of Port Conway, opposite Port Royal. His base of supplies was established at Aquia Creek, and the railroad from that point to the Rappahannock rebuilt.

Meanwhile General Lee was busy in preparing his new defensive line. To prevent the Federal gunboats from ascending the Rappahannock to Burnside's assistance, a battery, protected by intrenchments, was posted on the river bank four miles below the city. The fords of the Rappahannock above Fredericksburg were closely guarded by the cavalry, and W. H. F. Lee's brigade was stationed at Port Royal to watch the enemy in that direction. A strong defensive position was selected on the heights in the rear of the city. The left rested on the river about a mile and a half above Fredericksburg, and the right was beyond the Richmond railroad, stretching almost to the Massaponax. These hills were commanded by the Stafford Heights in possession of Burnside, and in order to remedy this as far as possible, earthworks were constructed upon their crest, at the most suitable positions for artillery. The plain in which the city lay was so completely commanded by the batteries on the opposite heights, and the narrow river, with its high, sheltering banks, afforded such admirable opportunities for laying down bridges out of reach of the Southern artillery, that General Lee had no hope of being able to prevent the passage of the stream, should the enemy see fit to attempt it. Therefore he selected his position solely with a view to resist the advance of the Federals after crossing, and contented himself with guarding the river with a small force, with which he hoped to impede the progress of the enemy until the army could be concentrated.*

By the 21st it was evident that the whole force of the Fed-

* General Lee's Report.

erals had reached Falmouth. On the afternoon of the same day, General Patrick, of the Federal army, crossed the river, under a flag of truce, bearing a letter from General Sumner, addressed to the authorities of Fredericksburg, demanding the surrender of the city by five o'clock. General Sumner threatened that if this demand were refused, he would bombard the city at nine o'clock the next morning.

For two days a severe storm had been raging, and was still unabated when this demand was received. The authorities of the city were placed in a trying position. It was not to be supposed that General Lee would allow the place to be occupied by the Federals without resistance, and it lay perfectly exposed to the fire of the Federal batteries, which looked right down into its streets. With the hope of sparing the city the horrors of a bombardment, General Lee informed the municipal authorities that the place would not be used by him for military purposes, but that he would resist any attempt of the enemy to occupy it. Thus authorized, the Mayor and Council assured General Sumner that the city would not be used for hostile purpose by the Confederates, unless he should attempt to occupy it, and asked him to forbear his threatened bombardment. General Sumner, to his credit, very readily accepted the pledge, and promised to defer the bombardment as long as the pledge was respected by the Confederates.

In view, however, of the certainty of an early engagement, General Lee advised the non-combatants to withdraw from the city. The majority of the citizens did so, and sought shelter wherever they could find it in the neighboring country. The weather was intensely cold, and their sufferings were very great. Many — indeed the majority — of them were houseless and homeless, and they took refuge in barns, sheds, shelters of boughs, and tent flies generously contributed by the troops. Here, exposed to the cold and wet, they waited until the period

of danger had passed by. Women who had been reared in wealth and ease had scarcely clothing enough to keep them from freezing; they could with difficulty procure food, and considered themselves fortunate if they could obtain a bundle of straw for a bed — many being forced to sleep on the ground. Only those who witnessed this can form a just appreciation of these heroic people. All this while they never murmured. If the sacrifice of their homes would contribute to the success of their cause they were willing to give them up.

The citizens of the South contributed generously to their relief when their sufferings became known, and the Army of Northern Virginia, although suffering for food, shared its scanty rations with the women and children who had fled from the town. Many of the citizens remained in Fredericksburg. They had no other homes, and they preferred to stay, and risk the bombardment, hoping that the Federal commander would not execute his barbarous threat. General Lee pays a high compliment to the citizens of Fredericksburg, in his report of the campaign. — “History,” he says, “presents no instance of a people exhibiting a purer and more unselfish patriotism, or a higher spirit of fortitude and courage than was evinced by the citizens of Fredericksburg. They cheerfully incurred great hardships and privations, and surrendered their homes and property to destruction rather than yield them into the hands of the enemies of their country.”

After the completion of his preparations for supplying his army from Aquia Creek, General Burnside turned his attention to securing a passage of the Rappahannock. As I have stated, his own desire was to defer active operations until the spring. This, however, was not the wish of either the Government or people of the North. Both were urgent in their demands for an advance upon Lee. They were anxious that the “Rebel army should be defeated and Richmond captured before Christ-

mas." This pressure was greater than General Burnside had anticipated, and too strong to be resisted by him, and he was forced, against his inclination, to abandon his own designs, and make his preparations for an immediate advance.

It was in his power either to make a direct attack upon the Confederate position, or to pass the river lower down or higher up, and endeavor to turn either the Confederate right or left flank. A direct attack upon such a strong line as that occupied by General Lee did not seem to promise any decided success, and General Burnside at first entertained the idea of attempting a turning movement against the Southern right flank, and commenced to concentrate his army for that purpose at Skenker's Neck, twelve miles below Falmouth. General Lee detected this movement, however, and stationed D. H. Hill opposite Skenker's Neck, and ordered General Jackson to take position with his corps between Fredericksburg and Port Royal, in order to support either Longstreet or Hill, as occasion might require. The appearance of these troops upon the Lower Rappahannock convinced General Burnside that his designs were understood, and the movement against Lee's right was abandoned. There was still left to Burnside a movement which promised more success than a direct attempt to carry the Spottsylvania Heights. It was to cross the Rappahannock higher up the stream, and move against Lee's left flank. As this movement would threaten the Confederate commander's communications with Richmond, it would, if vigorously sustained, force General Lee to leave his works behind Fredericksburg, and meet the Federal army upon ground of their own choosing. This plan does not seem to have been entertained by General Burnside. He seems to have been influenced by the belief that by sending Hill and Jackson to the vicinity of Port Royal, Lee had committed an error of which he could take advantage, and he resolved to cross the river at Fredericksburg, and attack General Lee before the

latter could reunite his forces. In other words he hoped, by surprising his enemy, to throw his whole army upon Longstreet's corps alone—a remarkable programme, truly, for so old a soldier as the Federal commander.

Information gathered by General Hampton, who, with his cavalry, crossed the Rappahannock above Fredericksburg, on the 28th of November, and penetrated as far as Dumfries, (capturing two squadrons of Federal cavalry, and a number of wagons,) relieved General Lee of any anxiety concerning his left flank, and enabled him to give his whole attention to the enemy opposite and below him.

IV.

FREDERICKSBURG.

On the night of the 10th of December, the Chief of Artillery of the Federal army, General Hunt, posted on the Stafford Heights, immediately opposite Fredericksburg and for some distance below, a powerful force of one hundred and forty-seven guns, with which to protect the passage of the river and command the city and adjacent plain. Simultaneously the Federal columns were formed on the heights, but a few hundred yards from the stream, and the ponton trains were moved down to the water's edge.

Burnside had determined to bridge the river at five different points, — three immediately opposite Fredericksburg, and two about a mile and a half lower down, near the mouth of Deep Run. The Grand Divisions of Sumner and Hooker were to cross at the upper bridges, while Franklin's Grand Division was to cross at the lower bridges, near Deep Run. His preparations were made with great care, and at two o'clock on the

morning of the 11th of December, the working parties moved down to the water's edge, and, silently launching the boats, proceeded to the construction of the bridges.

In order to check any advance of the enemy until his army could be concentrated, General Lee had posted detachments of riflemen along the Southern shore, with orders to them to prevent the construction of bridges as long as possible, and gain as much time as they could. The force charged with this duty at Fredericksburg, consisted of the 17th and 18th Mississippi regiments, of Barksdale's brigade, supported by the 8th Florida, of Anderson's division. The 3d Georgia regiment of Anderson's division was also held in reserve in the city.

A heavy fog floated over the Rappahannock on the night of the 10th, and the morning of the 11th of December, and the Federal commander hoped that this would screen his working parties from observation until their work should be too far accomplished to be prevented. Shortly after two o'clock, however, the unusual stir on the Stafford shore attracted the attention of the Confederate pickets, and at three o'clock, two guns in quick succession from the Southern lines, announced that the movement of General Burnside had been discovered. Barksdale's men were instantly on the alert.

Towards four o'clock, the moonlight, struggling through the mist, revealed the shadowy forms of the bridge builders, working energetically upon their floating structures. Instantly a sharp and destructive fire was opened from the south shore, where the Southern riflemen were posted among the buildings and stone walls of the river street of the city. The fire was deliberate, and the working parties at once scampered off the bridges, leaving their dead and wounded upon them. In a few minutes they returned and bore them off. Twice between this and dawn did the enemy attempt to continue their work. Each time their engineer troops went to the end of the bridges and

attempted to complete them, but each time they were driven back with loss. So destructive was Barksdale's fire that two regiments of Federal infantry, sent to cover their working parties, soon lost one hundred and fifty men.* Every effort of the enemy failed to push forward the work, and the Federal commander found that he could do nothing until the Mississippians were dislodged.

Accordingly, at ten o'clock, he ordered his batteries to open upon the southern shore. For more than an hour this tremendous bombardment was maintained. It accomplished very little, however, as the Southern army was too far distant to be injured by it, and Barksdale's men were too near the edge of the water to be reached, the Federal artillerists being unable to depress their guns sufficiently to shell the position of the sharpshooters. Only those in the upper part of the city were injured by it.

The bombardment of Fredericksburg was a useless and barbarous measure. The troops of Barksdale's brigade were sheltered from the Federal fire, and in consequence of this the Northern guns were directed upon the city, which General Burnside knew to be full of women and children at the time. Many of the citizens had returned with their families after the first alarm, believing that the city would not be shelled. The river is so narrow at this point—it is only about two hundred yards in width—that the presence of these helpless people could not have escaped the notice of the Federal commander. Moreover, he had authorized General Sumner to promise that the city should not be fired upon as long as it was not used for hostile demonstrations by the Confederates. As he was informed of General Lee's determination to prevent him from occupying it, this promise, at least, demanded that he should give notice of his intention to fire upon the city at any

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 249.

subsequent time. He did not do this, however, but wantonly opened his guns, at point blank range, upon the town.

The scene which ensued was frightful. The air was filled with deafening reports, and the opposite heights seemed to be literally on fire. Storms of shell, round shot, and grape swept through the streets, amidst the terrified citizens as they fled in dismay towards the open country. In a short while the town was fired, and there was scarcely a house that had not suffered more or less from the terrible cannonade of the enemy. The citizens, taken by surprise, had no time to prepare for their flight, and rushed out into the open country just as they had been attired by their comfortable firesides. One young girl was shot through the hip, and several of the inhabitants otherwise injured. Some of the citizens, rather than brave the storm of missiles that swept through the streets, crouched in the cellars of their houses, momentarily expecting to be buried in the ruins of the buildings.

An eye-witness thus describes the sufferings of those who were driven from the city : —

“ The citizens, several hundred in number, who had returned to the town under the delusion that it would not be attacked, left it during the day, single or in families, and sought for refuge and safety in the country. They are now scattered about, some in cabins and some in the open air. This morning (the 12th) I met two women, each with an infant and several little children, wandering along the railroad. The children were all bare-footed, and it made the heart bleed to see their little blue feet treading painfully the frozen ground, blindly following their poor mothers who knew as little as themselves where to seek food and shelter. Nearer the town I saw three women with a number of children, who had established themselves in a three-sided shelter built of rails, and covered and lined with wheat straw. * * * In two cabins, within a

mile and a half of the town, between twenty and thirty women and children were crowded. An old gentleman who was standing near one of the huts, informed me that at the time of the threat of the enemy to shell the town, he had moved his household goods and personal property into the country, but that a few days ago, thinking there was no danger, he had carried them back. His house was burnt yesterday, and everything he had in the world consumed in it."

These sights were but too common at the time.

By the bombardment of Fredericksburg General Burnside accomplished nothing except to inflict great suffering upon the helpless inhabitants. Under the cover of this cannonade, he made another effort to build his bridges, but failed. He had not yet succeeded in dislodging the Southern riflemen, and the afternoon of the day had arrived.

In this state of affairs his Chief of Artillery advised him to cross a strong party in ponton-boats, and drive the Mississippians from the river shore. This done, his artillery could keep the town clear of them, and the bridge could be finished.* Acting upon this advice, Burnside threw three regiments across the river in boats, in the face of a sharp fire, and by one o'clock succeeded in driving Barksdale's infantry into the upper part of the city. The bridges were completed in a few minutes, and later in the afternoon Howard's division of Couch's corps crossed the river and entered the town. Barksdale resisted the advance of the enemy with great gallantry until dark, when his troops were withdrawn by General Lee.

Franklin's passage of the river was more easily effected. The Confederates opposed to him did not enjoy the advantages which were afforded Barksdale's men by the buildings at Fredericksburg. By noon this force had been driven off, and Franklin had succeeded in constructing two bridges.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 241.

During the night of the 11th and all of the 12th, General Burnside crossed his army to the Spottsylvania shore, and the morning of the 13th found his entire force in front of the Southern position. A heavy fog sheltered his movements from material interruption from the Confederate artillery, General Lee being unwilling to open his guns on the town in consideration of its still being occupied by a number of its citizens.

As soon as Burnside's intentions were developed, Generals D. H. Hill and Jackson were recalled from Port Royal, and by the morning of the 13th the entire Army of Northern Virginia was concentrated on the heights of Spottsylvania.

The position occupied by General Lee was one of great strength. "Longstreet's corps constituted the left, with Anderson's division resting upon the river, and those of McLaws, Pickett and Hood extending to the right in the order named. Ransom's divisions supported the batteries on Marye's and Willis' hills, at the foot of which Cobb's brigade of McLaws' division, and the 24th North Carolina, of Ransom's brigade, were stationed, protected by a stone wall. The immediate care of this point was committed to General Ransom. The Washington Artillery occupied the redoubts on the crest of Marye's Hill, and those on the height to the right and left, were held by a part of the reserve artillery, Colonel E. P. Alexander's battalion, and the division batteries of Anderson, Ransom and McLaws. A. P. Hill of Jackson's corps, was posted between Hood's right, and Hamilton's Crossing, on the railroad. His front line, consisting of the brigades of Pender, Lane, and Archer, occupied the edge of a wood. Lieutenant-Colonel Walker, with fourteen pieces of artillery was posted near the right, supported by the 40th and 35th Virginia regiments, of Field's brigade, commanded by Colonel Brockenborough. Lane's brigade, thrown forward in advance of the general line, held the woods, which here projected into the open

ground. Thomas' brigade was stationed behind the interval between Lane and Pender, and Gregg's in rear of that, between Lane and Archer. These two brigades, with the 47th Virginia regiment, and 22nd Virginia battalion, of Field's brigade, constituted General Hill's reserve. Early's and Taliaferro's divisions composed Jackson's second line—D. H. Hill's division his reserve. His artillery was distributed along his line in the most eligible positions, so as to command the open ground in front. General Stuart, with two brigades of cavalry, and his horse artillery, occupied the plain on Jackson's right, extending to Massaponax Creek."*

The range of hills on which this line was formed, encloses a semi-circular plain extending from its base to the river. On the Southern left the range touches the river, at a distance of less than a quarter of a mile from the city, and sweeping around towards the right, crosses the Richmond Railroad, at a distance of about two miles from the river, making the line held by the Confederates about five miles in length. The country between the hills and the river is to a great extent rugged, and almost entirely open. Immediately above the town, on the Southern left, the hills are bold and without trees or undergrowth, but as the range extends to the eastward the elevation decreases, and the ridge becomes more thickly wooded. The plain below the hills is intersected by a small stream called Deep Run, whose precipitate banks afford an admirable shelter for an attacking force. The Southern position was, as I have said, one of great strength, and when the battle opened there were few who doubted that the attempt to carry it would be repulsed.

Having failed to surprise General Lee, General Burnside now resolved to storm his position and drive the Southern army from it. His plan was substantially, as follows: Franklin's Grand Division, which formed the Union left, strengthened by

* General Lee's Report.

one of Hooker's corps — about one half of the Federal army — was to assault Jackson's position at Hamilton's Crossing, which was correctly supposed to be the weakest part of the line, and when this should be successfully accomplished, Sumner, with the rest of the army, was to storm the heights on the Southern left. Franklin was directed to endeavor to seize the railroad and wagon road leading to Richmond.

On the morning of the 13th of December, the country immediately around Fredericksburg was shrouded in a dense fog. At an early hour the enemy's batteries on the Stafford Heights opened on Longstreet's position, and under the cover of this fire Franklin and Sumner formed their columns of attack.

About eight o'clock General Lee left his headquarters, and, accompanied by Generals Jackson and Stuart passed over to Hamilton's Crossing to inspect that portion of his line. The correspondent of the *London Times*, who was present during the action, thus speaks of the Confederate commander, as he appeared on this memorable day. "It would be presumptuous in me to say one word in commendation of the serenity or, if I may so express it, the unconscious dignity of General Lee's courage, when he is under fire. No one who sees and knows his demeanor in ordinary life would expect anything else from one so calm, so undemonstrative and unassuming. But the description applied, after the battle of the Alma, to Lord Raglan, by Marshal St. Arnaud, and in which, noticing Lord Raglan's unconsciousness under fire, he speaks of his 'antique heroism,' seems to me so applicable to General Lee that I cannot forbear recalling it here. At a subsequent period of the day, General Lee assumed his station on the hill which takes its name from him, and thence, in company with General Longstreet, calmly watched the repulse of the repeated Federal efforts against the heights on which he stood."

Shortly after nine o'clock the fog lifted, and disclosed in the

plain below the columns of General Franklin moving against Hamilton's Crossing. As they advanced, Major Pelham of the Stuart Horse Artillery, who was stationed with one section of his battery on the Port Royal road, opened a severe enfilade fire upon their left, causing them to halt. Four Federal batteries at once opened on him, but he sustained his position bravely until withdrawn by General Stuart. As soon as Pelham was withdrawn, Franklin extended his left down the Port Royal road, and opened a heavy fire upon Jackson's line from his batteries. No reply being returned, he threw forward his infantry towards the position occupied by Walker's guns. The Confederates awaited the approach of the enemy in silence, until the Federal line was within less than eight hundred yards. Then Walker greeted them with the sudden fire of fourteen guns, which did such execution that the enemy broke and fell back to their original position.

This was merely the beginning of the engagement. About one o'clock Franklin made his main attack. Throwing forward three "compact lines of infantry," he made a vigorous assault upon General A. P. Hill's position. His advance was momentarily checked by the fire of Hill's artillery, but pressing on in spite of this, he was soon hotly engaged with the Southern infantry. Between the brigades of Archer and Lane there was, unfortunately, a considerable interval, and before this could be closed, Meade's two divisions broke through it with great impetuosity, and drove back Hill's men upon Jackson's second line. Jackson met the danger promptly by bringing up his second line, consisting of the divisions of Early, Trimble, and Taliaferro. These troops assailed the enemy in front, and on both flanks, and drove them back across the railroad, and into the plain. Taliaferro's division advanced upon Early's left and driving the enemy from the woods in its front, compelled them to take refuge in the cut of the railroad, from which they were

dislodged by the brigades of Hoke and Atkinson and forced to retreat across the plain to the protection of their batteries. The division attacking Jackson's extreme left was driven back by the fire of his artillery. Early, following up his success drove the enemy in confusion across the plain, and only ceased his pursuit when his line came under the fire of the batteries on the Stafford Heights.

The efforts of Franklin had now been decisively repulsed, and during the remainder of the day, he contented himself with shelling the Southern line, and skirmishing with Jackson's advanced forces.

Meanwhile Sumner had endeavored to execute the task assigned to him. About eleven o'clock he commenced to move forward from the town, forming a strong column of assault, under the protection of the houses. Towards noon he emerged from the city, with French's and Hancock's divisions, and endeavored to seize Marye's and Willis' hills. His attack was made with great spirit and determination, and was received with a murderous fire of infantry and artillery, under which no troops could stand. For awhile the Federals pressed on, but finally broke in confusion and fled into the town, sheltering themselves behind the houses. In this charge the enemy lost nearly half of the troops engaged. The Confederates were exposed to a heavy fire from the batteries across the river, but, during the remainder of the battle, they paid no attention to this, but concentrated the fire of their artillery upon the Federal infantry advancing to the attack.

Howard's, Sturgis', and Getty's divisions were advanced by Sumner, to renew the attack, and when these were broken and driven back by Longstreet's fatal fire, General Burnside sent his last reserve, consisting of three divisions, and ordered General Hooker to carry the heights at all hazards. Those who saw the Federal commander during this part of the battle,

assert that the repeated failures of his army seemed to make him desperate. When the third assault on Longstreet's position failed, he left his headquarters at the Phillips House, about a mile back from the river, and riding down to the bank of the Rappahannock, paced restlessly up and down, watching the battle with anxiety, and exclaiming vehemently, "That crest must be carried to-night."*

Six times the Federal infantry assaulted the heights, and six times they were driven back with shattered ranks. They fought gallantly, winning the admiration of their opponents. Some of their dead were found within pistol-shot of the Southern line. Their last assault was made a little before dark.

The part played by Longstreet's men was by no means so easy as some writers have declared. Their position was commanded by the batteries in Stafford, and during the day they were subjected to a heavy fire from these guns, as well as to the fire of the artillery and infantry of the attacking force in their front. In spite of this, however, they held their ground with great gallantry, repulsing every assault of the enemy with slaughter.

The battle ended at dark. General Burnside had employed his whole army during the day, while General Lee had only about twenty-five thousand troops engaged, the greater part of his army being simply spectators.

The Confederate loss in the battle was four thousand two hundred and one, killed and wounded. About one hundred prisoners were taken when the city was entered by the enemy. General Cobb was killed, General Gregg mortally wounded, and General Cooke severely wounded. The Federal loss was twelve thousand three hundred and twenty-one, killed, wounded, and missing. General Lee announced the result of the battle in the following dispatch to the War Department:—

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 251.

“TO GENERAL COOPER:—

“At nine o'clock this morning the enemy attacked our right wing, and as the fog lifted, the battle ran along the whole line from right to left, until 6 P. M., the enemy being repulsed at all points. Thanks be to God. As usual, we have to mourn the loss of many of our brave men. I expect the battle will be renewed at daylight to-morrow morning.

R. E. LEE.”

During the night the Southern army erected earthworks at exposed points, and strengthened its position still more. The attack of the enemy had been so easily repulsed, and with such a small portion of the army that General Lee was confident the battle would be renewed the next day, and at dawn on the 14th his troops were under arms, ready to resist the anticipated attack. As he expected to be again assailed, he did not wish to lose the advantages of his position by advancing upon the enemy.* He was necessarily ignorant of the great damage inflicted upon the Federal army, and was unwilling to expose his troops to the fire of the batteries in Stafford. These were sound reasons for remaining quiet, but, viewing the matter by the light of subsequent revelations, it is a pity that General Lee did not take General Jackson's advice, and attack Burnside in Fredericksburg on the night of the 13th. Had he done so, he could not have failed to destroy the Army of the Potomac.

The defeat sustained by the Federal army on the 13th was decisive, and when, that night, it crowded into Fredericksburg, expecting every moment that General Lee would follow up his advantage by a night attack, there were signs of demoralization among the men. Under these circumstances it became the duty of General Burnside to retire at once across the Rappahannock. He had no reason to believe that General Lee would

* General Lee's Report.

not attack him. On the contrary, there was every reason to suppose that Lee would assume the offensive. The Federal army was in no condition to resist, and common sense should have induced Burnside to put an end to this danger as soon as possible.

The course he adopted was the reverse of this. He does not seem to have known the condition of his army, and resolved to form his old corps (the 9th) in column of attack by regiments, on the morning of the 14th, and lead it in person in a last effort to carry Marye's Hill. He at once issued orders for carrying out his gallant, but foolish resolution. In his evidence before the Congressional "Committee on the conduct of the war," he thus describes the result :

"The order was given, and the order of the attack was formed. On the next morning, just before the column was to have started, General Sumner came up to me and said : ' General, I hope you will desist from this attack. I do not know of any general officer who approves of it, and I think it will prove disastrous to the army.' Advice of that kind from General Sumner, who has always been in favor of our advancing whenever it was possible, caused me to hesitate. I kept the column of attack formed, and sent over for the corps and division commanders and consulted with them. They unanimously voted against the attack. I then went over to see the officers of the command on the other side, and found that the same opinion prevailed among them. I then sent for General Franklin, who was on the left, and he was of exactly the same opinion. This caused me to decide that I ought not to make the attack I had contemplated ; and besides, inasmuch as the President of the United States had told me not to be in haste in making this attack — that he would give me all the support he could, but he did not want the Army of the Potomac destroyed, — I felt that I could not take the responsibility of ordering the attack, not-

withstanding my own belief at the time that the works could be carried. In the afternoon of that day I again saw the officers, and told them that I had decided to withdraw to this side of the river all our forces, except enough to hold the town and the bridge heads, but should keep the bridges there for future operations in case we wanted to cross again."

During the fourteenth, the Federal artillery, north of the river opened at intervals on the Confederate line. The day passed away, without any further hostile demonstration, and during the fifteenth there was no change in the situation. On the night of the 15th a violent storm of wind and rain set in, and General Burnside took advantage of it to retire across the river. Yielding to the advice of General Hooker, he decided not to attempt to hold the town, and withdraw his entire force, taking up his bridges after him. His retreat was discovered by the Confederates on the morning of the 16th, but so well persuaded was General Lee that the battle would yet be renewed, that he sent the following dispatch to Richmond :

"HEADQUARTERS, NEAR FREDERICKSBURG,
December 16.

"As far as can be ascertained this stormy morning, the enemy has disappeared in our immediate front, and has re-crossed the Rappahannock.

"I presume he is meditating a passage at some other point.
R. E. LEE."

No further effort was made by the Federal commander, however, and the campaign closed with the battle of Fredericksburg, the events of which were reported to the Southern Government by General Lee, in the following dispatch :

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
14th December, 1862.

“THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR, RICHMOND, VA.;

“SIR: On the night of the 10th instant, the enemy commenced to throw three bridges over the Rappahannock — two at Fredericksburg, and the third about a mile and a quarter below, near the mouth of Deep Run.

“The plain on which Fredericksburg stands is so completely commanded by the hills of Stafford, in possession of the enemy, that no effectual opposition could be offered to the construction of the bridges or the passage of the river, without exposing our troops to the destructive fire of his numerous batteries. Positions were, therefore, selected to oppose his advance after crossing. The narrowness of the Rappahannock, its winding course, and deep bed, afforded opportunity for the construction of bridges at points beyond the reach of our artillery, and the banks had to be watched by skirmishers. The latter sheltering themselves behind the houses, drove back the working parties of the enemy at the bridges opposite the city; but at the lowest point of crossing, where no shelter could be had, our sharpshooters were themselves driven off, and the completion of the bridge was effected about noon on the 11th.

“In the afternoon of that day the enemy's batteries opened upon the city, and by dark had so demolished the houses on the river bank as to deprive our skirmishers of shelter; and, under cover of his guns, he effected a lodgement in the town.

“The troops, which had so gallantly held their position in the city, under the severe cannonade during the day, resisting the advance of the enemy at every step, were withdrawn during the night, as were also those, who, with equal tenacity, had maintained their post at the lowest bridge. Under cover of darkness and of a dense fog, on the 12th, a large force passed

the river and took position on the right bank, protected by their heavy guns on the left.

“The morning of the 13th, his arrangements for attack being completed, about nine o’clock — the movement veiled by a fog — he advanced boldly in large force against our right wing. General Jackson’s corps occupied the right of our line, which rested on the railroad; General Longstreet’s the left, extending along the heights to the Rappahannock, above Fredericksburg. General Stuart, with two brigades of cavalry, was posted in the extensive plain on our extreme right.

“As soon as the advance of the enemy was discovered through the fog, General Stuart, with his accustomed promptness, moved up a section of his horse artillery, which opened with effect upon his flank, and drew upon the gallant Pelham a heavy fire, which he sustained, unflinchingly, for about two hours. In the meantime the enemy was fiercely encountered by General A. P. Hill’s division, forming General Jackson’s right, and, after an obstinate combat, repulsed. During this attack, which was protracted and hotly contested, two of General Hill’s brigades were driven back upon our second line.

“General Early, with part of his division, being ordered to his support, drove the enemy back from the point of woods he had seized, and pursued him into the plain, until arrested by his artillery. The right of the enemy’s column, extending beyond Hill’s front, encountered the right of General Hood, of Longstreet’s corps. The enemy took possession of a small copse in front of Hood, but were quickly dispossessed, and repulsed with loss.

“During the attack on our right, the enemy was crossing troops over his bridges at Fredericksburg, and massing them in front of Longstreet’s line. Soon after his repulse on our right, he commenced a series of attacks on our left, with a view of obtaining possession of the heights immediately overlooking the

town. These repeated attacks were repulsed, in gallant style, by the Washington Artillery, under Colonel Walton, and a portion of McLaws' division, which occupied these heights.

"The last assault was made after dark, when Colonel Alexander's battalion had relieved the Washington Artillery, (whose ammunition had been exhausted,) and ended the contest for the day. The enemy was supported in his attacks by the fire of strong batteries of artillery on the right bank of the river, as well as by his numerous heavy batteries on the Stafford Heights.

"Our loss during the operations, since the movements of the enemy began, amounts to about eighteen hundred, killed and wounded. Among the former, I regret to report the death of the patriotic soldier and statesman, Brigadier-General Thomas R. R. Cobb, who fell upon our left; and among the latter, that brave soldier and accomplished gentleman, Brigadier-General Maxcy Gregg, who was very seriously, and it is feared, mortally wounded during the attack on our right.

"The enemy to-day has been apparently engaged in caring for his wounded and burying his dead. His troops are visible in their first position in line of battle, but, with the exception of some desultory cannonading and firing between skirmishers, he has not attempted to renew the attack. About five hundred and fifty prisoners were taken during the engagement, but the full extent of his loss is unknown.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

(*Official.*)

CHARLES MARSHALL, *Major and A. D. C.*"

V.

WINTER QUARTERS.

When it became certain that the Federal army had no intention of renewing hostilities, the Army of Northern Virginia was ordered to prepare for going into winter quarters. The army was disposed along the Rappahannock, from Fredericksburg to Port Royal, and detachments of observation stationed in the vicinity of the upper fords. Soon the winter set in in full rigor, and the men went to work to make themselves as comfortable as possible in their rude huts and shelters.

The year was closed by General Lee with an address to his army, congratulating the men upon their achievements.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY of NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
DECEMBER 31, 1862.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 132.

“The General commanding takes this occasion to express to the officers and soldiers of the army, his high appreciation of the fortitude, valor, and devotion displayed by them, which, under the blessing of Almighty God, have added the victory of Fredericksburg to the long list of their triumphs.

“An arduous march performed with celerity under many disadvantages exhibited the discipline and spirit of the troops, and their eagerness to confront the foe.

“The immense army of the enemy completed its preparations for the attack without interruption and gave battle in its own time, and on ground of its own selection.

“It was encountered by less than twenty thousand of this

brave army, and its columns crushed and broken, hurled back at every point with such fearful slaughter that escape from entire destruction became the boast of those who had advanced in full confidence of victory.

“That this great result was achieved with a loss small in point of numbers, only augments the admiration with which the Commanding General regards the prowess of the troops, and increases his gratitude to Him who hath given us the victory.

“The war is not yet ended. The enemy is still numerous and strong, and the country demands of the army a renewal of its heroic efforts in her behalf. Nobly has it responded to her call in the past, and she will never appeal in vain to its courage and patriotism.

“The signal manifestations of Divine mercy that have distinguished the eventful and glorious campaign of the year just closing, give assurance of hope that under the guidance of the same Almighty hand the coming year will be no less fruitful of events that will ensure the safety, peace and happiness of our beloved country, and add new lustre to the already imperishable name of the Army of Northern Virginia.

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

The winter was intensely cold, and as early as the middle of December several of the Federal pickets were frozen to death. The Confederate troops suffered severely. They were badly clothed, and poorly provided for the winter. About the first of December General Lee wrote to the War Department, stating that several thousand of his men were barefooted. He advised the Government to seize for the use of the army the shoes in the hands of the speculators, paying a fair price for them. The Government, however, did not see fit to do this. The system of impressments was so managed throughout the war as to give

the greatest dissatisfaction to the people, and to afford the smallest amount of benefit to the army. The Quartermaster-General's office was never filled by a competent person, and the army was a constant sufferer from its incapacity.

General Lee fared little better than his men. Late into the winter he steadily refused to establish his headquarters in a house, and throughout the entire campaign from Richmond to Fredericksburg, his quarters were in the field, and many of his staff slept under tent-flies only until the weather became too cold for them to do so. This was fully appreciated by the men, who were resolved that their commander should hear no murmurs from them, since he so generously shared their privations. An English gentleman who visited General Lee's headquarters during the fall, thus describes what he saw and heard there:—

“In visiting the headquarters of the Confederate Generals, but particularly those of General Lee, any one accustomed to see European armies in the field, cannot fail to be struck with the great absence of all the pomp and circumstance of war in and around their encampments. Lee's headquarters consisted of about seven or eight pole tents, pitched with their backs to a stake fence, upon a piece of ground so rocky that it was unpleasant to ride over it, its only recommendation being a little stream of good water which flowed close by the General's tent. In front of the tents were some three four-wheeled wagons, drawn up without any regularity, and a number of horses roamed loose about the field. The servants, who were of course slaves, and the mounted soldiers, called ‘couriers,’ who always accompany each General of division in the field, were unprovided with tents, and slept in or under the wagons. Wagons, tents, and some of the horses were marked U. S., showing that part of that huge debt in the North has gone to furnishing even the Confederate Generals with camp equipments. No guard or sentries were to be seen in the vicinity;

no crowd of aids-de-camp loitering about, making themselves agreeable to visitors, and endeavoring to save their Generals from receiving those who have no particular business. A large farm-house stands close by, which, in any other army, would have been the General's residence *pro tem.*, but, as no liberties are allowed to be taken with personal property in Lee's army, he is particular in setting a good example himself. His staff are crowded together, two or three in a tent; none are allowed to carry more baggage than a small box each, and his own kit is but very little larger. Every one who approaches him, does so with marked respect, although there is none of that bowing and flourishing of forage caps which occurs in the presence of European Generals; and, while all honor him and place implicit faith in his courage and ability, those with whom he is most intimate feel for him the affection of sons to a father. Old General Scott was correct in saying that when Lee joined the Southern cause, it was worth as much as the accession of twenty thousand men to the 'rebels.' Since then, every injury that it was possible to inflict, the Northerners have heaped upon him. His house on the Pamunkey River was burnt to the ground, and the slaves carried away, many of them by force, while his residence on the Arlington Heights was not only gutted of its furniture, but even the very relics of George Washington were stolen from it, and paraded in triumph in the saloons of New York and Boston. Notwithstanding all these personal losses, however, when speaking of the Yankees, he neither evinced any bitterness of feeling, nor gave utterance to a single violent expression, but alluded to many of his former friends and companions among them, in the kindest terms. He spoke as a man proud of the victories won by his country, and confident of ultimate success, under the blessing of the Almighty, whom he glorified for past successes, and whose aid he invoked for all future operations. He regretted that his limited

supply of tents and available accommodation would prevent him from putting us up, but he kindly placed at our disposal horses, or a two-horse wagon, if we preferred it, to drive about in."

During the winter General Lee endeavored to remedy several evils in his army. In the campaigns of 1862, he had suffered very great inconvenience in consequence of having inferior artillery, and a poor quality of fixed ammunition. In order to remedy the evil as far as possible, he replaced his original batteries with the better guns taken from the enemy, as far as they would go, and urged the Government to take advantage of the suspension of hostilities for the winter, to recast all the twelve-pounder howitzers and smooth-bore six-pounders into twelve-pounder Napoleon, ten-pounder Parrott, and three-inch rifle-guns. He was so urgent in this matter that the Government granted his request, and by the spring his army was better supplied with artillery than it had ever been.

In order to provide food for his army he strongly urged the Government to purchase all the grain in the counties bordering upon the James River and Kanawha canal. The farmers in that section,* he said, were hoarding their provisions with the intention of putting up the price of breadstuffs, and he desired that the army should be saved from the suffering which such unpatriotic conduct would bring upon it.

The only occurrence which broke the rest of the army after the battle of Fredericksburg was the futile attempt made by General Burnside to assail the Confederate army once more in its stronghold. Smarting under his defeat, and blind to the extent to which that defeat had demoralized his army and destroyed its confidence in him, he resolved to make an effort to turn Lee's right, and drive him from Fredericksburg. His

*The farmers of this section were not alone in such practices. In too many portions of the South the farmers did all in their power to prevent their grain from going to feed the army.

design was to cross his army seven or eight miles below the city, and to insure the success of his movement he determined to send a strong column of cavalry towards Richmond to cut Lee's communications. His army was promptly prepared for the movement, and the cavalry expedition was ready to march when, on the 30th of December, he received an order from Washington not to attempt another advance without letting the President know of it. Surprised at such an injunction, he recalled the cavalry expedition, and hastened to Washington in person to learn the cause of the President's course. He was informed by Mr. Lincoln that the army had lost confidence in him, and that certain general officers had expressed the opinion that his proposed movement would result in disaster.* General Burnside's surprise and mortification were very great. The position in which he was placed was extremely humiliating, and his first impulse seems to have been to resign. Resolving, however, to make a last attempt to retrieve his reputation and regain the confidence of his army, he returned to the Rappahannock, and commenced his preparations for the execution of his design.

It was his intention to cross the Rappahannock this time at Banks' Ford, about six miles above Fredericksburg. The river was not then fordable, but it was so narrow at that point that it could be easily bridged. He meant to throw five bridges across the Rappahannock, and, crossing his army into Spottsylvania, endeavor to turn Lee's left, and force him to fall back from his works in order to maintain his communications with Richmond. To mask his real movement, he resolved to make feints of crossing at several different points above and below the city. Strong working parties were set to work to cut new and more direct roads through the woods to the fords, and batteries were planted, and rifle pits dug to protect the passage of the stream.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac — p. 257.

The weather up to this time had been excellent, and the roads were dry and hard. The enthusiasm of the army had been re-awakened to some degree, and it seemed certain that General Burnside was to have a favorable opportunity to essay the recovery of his lost laurels.

On the 19th of January 1863, his army began its march to the place of crossing. The Grand Divisions of Hooker and Franklin marched by parallel roads to convenient points for encamping, near the fords, where they passed the night. The movement was conducted with as much secrecy as possible, and Couch's corps was sent down the river to mask it by making a feint of crossing in that direction. The corps of General Sigel was left behind to guard the communications, and the late position of the army. The upper fords were reached on the 20th, and dispositions made for crossing. Powerful batteries of artillery were planted on the north bank to prevent any resistance from the south side to the construction of the bridges, and ponton trains were placed in readiness within a short distance of the river.

Thus far everything had gone well; but, during the night of the 20th, a terrible rain storm set in, which completely annihilated all of the Federal commander's plans. Mr. Swinton, who was present with the Federal army, thus describes the manner in which the elements fought against Burnside.

“It was a wild Walpurgis night, such as Goëthe paints in the *Faust*. Yet there was brave work done during its hours, for guns were hauled painfully up the heights and placed in their positions, and the pontons were drawn down nearer to the river. But it was already seen to be a hopeless task; for the clayey roads and fields, under the influence of the rain, had become bad beyond all former experience, and by daylight, when the boats should all have been on the banks ready to slide down into the water, but fifteen had been gotten up — not enough for one

bridge, and five were wanted. Moreover, the night operations had not escaped the notice of the wary enemy, and by morning Lee had massed his army to meet the menaced crossing. * * * * * The night's rain had made deplorable havoc with the roads; but herculean efforts were made to bring pontons enough into position to build a bridge or two withal. Double and triple teams of horses and mules were harnessed to each boat; but it was in vain. Long stout ropes were then attached to the teams, and a hundred and fifty men put to the task on each. The effort was but little more successful. Floundering through the mire for a few feet, the gang of Lili-putians with their huge-ribbed Gulliver, were forced to give over, breathless. Night arrived, but the pontons could not be got up, and the enemy's pickets, discovering what was going on, jocularly shouted out their intention to 'come over to-morrow and help build the bridges.'

"Morning dawned upon another day of rain and storm. The ground had gone from bad to worse, and now showed such a spectacle as might be presented by the elemental wrecks of another Deluge. An indescribable chaos of pontons, vehicles, and artillery encumbered all the roads—supply wagons upset by the road-side, guns stalled in the mud, ammunition trains mired by the way, and hundreds of horses and mules buried in the liquid muck. The army, in fact, was embargoed; it was no longer a question of how to go forward—it was a question of how to get back. The three days' rations brought on the persons of the men were exhausted, and the supply trains could not be moved up. To aid the return all the available force was put to work to corduroy the rotten roads. Next morning the army floundered and staggered back to the old camps, and so ended a movement, that will always live in the recollection of the army as the 'Mud March,' and which remains a striking

exemplification of the enormous difficulties incidents to winter campaigning in Virginia." *

The failure of this movement brought General Burnside's career to a close. He was hopeful of success when it began. Had he succeeded in crossing, he would have been undeceived very speedily. His design was quickly detected by General Lee, who at once made such dispositions to meet the Federal army as would have resulted in its certain defeat. So sure of this was the Southern commander, that he wrote to his Government that "it was fortunate for the Federals that they failed to get over the river."

The failure, however, together with the terrible hardships endured by the troops in the "Mud March" brought the Northern army to a state of almost open insubordination. The men were outspoken in their denunciations of their commander, and desertions became common and numerous.

General Burnside seemed to be under the impression that his want of success was due, not so much to the weather as to the fact that his officers had no confidence in him. In the bitterness of his disappointment, he prepared an order, dismissing from the service of the United States, Generals Hooker, Brooks, Cochrane, and Newton, and relieving from their commands in the Army of the Potomac, Generals Franklin, W. F. Smith, Sturgis, Ferrero, and Colonel Taylor — the first named under each head being decidedly the ablest of his lieutenants. He carried this order to Washington, and asked the approval of the Government, demanding either a compliance with this request or the acceptance of his resignation. Mr. Lincoln chose the latter alternative. He accepted General Burnside's resignation, and appointed as that officer's successor the man at whom Burnside's principal blow had been directed — Major-General Joseph Hooker.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 259-260.

Towards February the corps of General Longstreet was withdrawn from the army and sent south of the James River. The movement was for the purpose of checking the enemy, who commenced to make threatening demonstrations along the line of the Blackwater River, and to collect supplies from the lower counties south of the James, and from Eastern North Carolina. There were other commands scattered at various unimportant points along the Southern coast, which might have been devoted to this undertaking; but the Government, with its usual blindness, preferred to risk the safety of General Lee's army by taking away one of its most powerful members to incurring the chance of losing some paltry village in the Cotton States.

The sufferings of the army for food during the winter were severe. The Commissary General proved himself so incompetent to provide for the army that General Lee, about the middle of February, advised the Government to make an appeal to the people to bring supplies to the army to feed their sons and brothers. The suggestion was referred to the Commissary General, — the Government being incapable of rising above the forms of the “red tape” system — and that individual opposed it, — perhaps because it was at variance with his plan for starving the army, — and the matter was dropped. Had the Government been as true to the army as the army was to the Government, no effort, whether sanctioned by precedents or not, would have been spared to relieve the sufferings of the brave soldiers.

Another suggestion of General Lee was suffered to pass without being acted upon. The conscription had been managed in such a way, that instead of filling up the armies, it had arrayed the people against the Government. It fell far short of supplying the force needed, and, about the latter part of February, General Lee proposed that the Government should request the Governors of the States to aid more directly in re-

cruiting the armies. He said the people habitually expected too much from the troops then in the field; and warned the Government that because the South had gained many victories, it did not follow that it would always gain them; that the legitimate fruits of victory had hitherto been lost for the want of a sufficient force to secure them, and urged the Government to at least try to secure the coöperation of the State Governments. The advice was not heeded. When it is considered that the States were extremely averse to the conscription, and that some of them were open in their hostility to it, we may reasonably suppose that an appeal to them to raise troops of themselves and by their own authority, would have met with a favorable response, especially when endorsed by so influential a personage as General Lee. Yet the appeal was not made, and there is strong ground for believing that the Government, which was professedly based upon the principle of State rights, was too jealous of the States to depart in the least from a conscription which was totally destructive of that principle.

During the winter General Lee exerted himself to prepare for an advance of the enemy in the spring, by guarding all the practicable crossings of the river, from Skenker's Neck, below Fredericksburg, to United States Ford, above it. His army was so disposed as to be readily concentrated at any point along the river, and strong lines of earthworks were erected at various points for the purpose of disputing the passage of the stream, and for holding the enemy in check until the army could be concentrated.

Thus the long winter passed away, and on the 30th of March General Lee announced to the Government that the spring campaign had opened, and that his army might be in motion at any day.

VII.

THE CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN.

APRIL—MAY, 1863.

I.

THE CAMPAIGN OPENS.

THE defeat of General Burnside and his failures to recross the Rappahannock greatly exasperated the Northern people, but only increased their determination to carry the war to a successful close, and instead of abandoning their attempts in despair, they infused new vigor into their operations. As a means of weakening the South, and stirring up internal disorders which, it was supposed, would require strong detachments from the army to suppress, President Lincoln, on the 1st of January 1863, issued a proclamation declaring the Southern slaves free on and after that day, and announcing that the Federal Government would “do no act or acts to repress such persons or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.”

This proclamation was the most decided measure upon which the Federal Government had yet ventured, but so far as its effect upon the South is concerned, it failed to accomplish the end desired.

The appointment of General Hooker gave new life to the

army over which he was placed. He assumed the command on the 26th of January 1863, and at once set to work to check the evils from which his troops were suffering. His measures were vigorous and effective. He proved himself to be an officer of high administrative abilities, and as he had been so ruthless in his criticisms upon Generals McClellan and Burnside, and had accompanied these criticisms by such strong insinuations that he could succeed where they had failed, his countrymen were justified in expecting that he would prove the long-expected genius, and that into his hands would fall the prize for which others had so long contended in vain. These expectations were not destined to be realized. As a corps commander General Hooker had few, if any, superiors in the Federal service, but he was incapable of conducting such a campaign as was before his army. Bold to adopt a resolution, he proved himself weak and timid in its execution. Indeed the heavy responsibility of his position seemed to crush out of him every spark of genius. The opposition of his adversary seemed to bewilder him, and to render him incapable of acting with the daring and vigor which had always distinguished him while in a subordinate position.

His first care was to check the desertions which were rapidly thinning the ranks of the Army of the Potomac, and to restore to it the confidence which his predecessor had destroyed. His personal popularity secured the latter end, and the vigorous measures which he inaugurated put a stop to the desertions. The system of Grand Divisions had not been found to work well, and it was abolished and replaced by the corps organization. The staff and administrative departments of the army were rendered more effective; the various army corps were provided with distinctive badges, and the contentment and good will of the troops secured by a wise and liberal system of fur-

loughs.* His demands upon his Government were liberally responded to, and he was furnished with everything necessary to bring his army to the highest state of efficiency.

The wisest of all General Hooker's acts was the reorganization of his cavalry. Previous to his assumption of the command of the Army of the Potomac, the Federal cavalry had been scattered, in brigades or divisions, among the Grand Divisions of the army, — a system which rendered it incapable of concerted action. General Hooker consolidated it into a compact and powerful *corps*, under officers of tried ability, and provided it with horses and equipments of the most superior kind. From this time until the close of the war, the cavalry arm of the Army of the Potomac became of the highest usefulness to it, and until the surrender at Appomattox Court House, was far more efficient from various causes than that of the Confederates.†

So successful were General Hooker's exertions that when the spring opened he had an army of one hundred and twenty thousand men (infantry and artillery), twelve thousand finely equipped cavalry, and four hundred pieces of artillery. This force was in such good condition and so well provided with every necessity, and so many luxuries, that its commander proudly called it "the finest army on the planet."

It was divided into seven corps; the 1st under General Reynolds, the 2d under General Couch, the 3d under General Sickles, the 5th under General Meade, the 6th under General Sedgewick, the 11th under General Howard, the 12th under General Slocum. Thus prepared, General Hooker felt confident that the destruction of Lee's army was certain.

The campaign was opened by a reconnoissance of six regiments of Federal cavalry and a battery of artillery, under

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 268.

† See Note B at the end of the volume.

General Averill.* The object of this expedition was to cut Lee's communications at Gordonsville, and ascertain his strength and position.

On the morning of the 16th of March a telegram from General Lee's headquarters informed General Stuart that a column of Federal cavalry was in motion, and advised him to look out for it along the Upper Rappahannock. A small force was stationed at Kelley's Ford to protect the crossing, and General Fitz Lee's brigade was ordered to hold itself in readiness to meet the enemy. In consequence of the negligence of the pickets, General Averill forced a passage of the river at Kelley's Ford on the morning of the 17th, capturing the picket-guard, and, pushing on, soon encountered Fitz Lee's brigade, which was drawn up to receive him. A severe engagement ensued, during which the Federal cavalry displayed more efficiency than they had shown during the war. The battle lasted until late in the afternoon, when the enemy retreated, after suffering a heavy loss. The Confederates also lost heavily, and among their killed was Major Pelham, Stuart's invaluable artilleryman.

After this action there was a season of quiet, until the middle of April, when the roads were pronounced dry and hard enough for the movements of armies.

II.

HOOKER ADVANCES.

When General Lee announced to the War Department, on the 30th of March, that his army might be in motion at any day, he was not in a condition to undertake any offensive movement. General Longstreet, with about twenty-four thousand

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 268.

men, had been taken from him, and sent south of the James River, leaving him a little less than fifty thousand men on the Rappahannock. The information which reached him from the Federal lines convinced him that General Hooker would attack him as soon as the roads and weather would permit. In view of this he urged the Government to send him reënforcements, and on the 29th of April, when he had heard of Hooker's advance, renewed his appeal for more men, and urged that Longstreet's corps should be withdrawn from the south side and sent to him at once.* His wishes were not heeded, and the danger burst upon him in his weak condition.

During the month of April, General Hooker was busy preparing for his "on to Richmond," and watching General Lee. His cavalry made numerous attempts to penetrate Lee's line, unmask his position and gain information as to his strength. Almost every ford along the Rappahannock was attempted, but at each place Stuart's dispositions and vigilant troopers prevented the passage of the river.

The absence of General Longstreet, with his corps, seems to have been communicated to General Hooker at an early day, and he determined to attack Lee before reënforcements could arrive from Richmond. His plan was to move the principal part of his army to Kelley's Ford, and crossing the Rappahannock at that point, march directly to Chancellorsville. As Kelley's Ford was twenty-seven miles above Fredericksburg, he hoped to be able to pass the river and occupy Chancellorsville before General Lee could concentrate his forces to oppose

* The Government did not see fit to order Longstreet to the Rappahannock until Hooker had made his designs too plain to be misunderstood. On the 6th of May, Mr. Davis desired General Longstreet to go to General Lee immediately. At that time, however, Richmond was in great danger of capture by the Federal cavalry, and General Longstreet very properly declined to withdraw his command until communication with General Lee was restored and the city in a condition of defence.

him. In order to mask his movement upon Chancellorsville, he resolved to throw a column consisting of the 1st, 3d, and 6th corps, all under General Sedgewick, across the Rappahannock at a point immediately below Fredericksburg. This column was to make such demonstrations as would lead General Lee to suppose that the main attack was to be made against the Heights of Fredericksburg. At the same time a body of ten thousand cavalry was to be sent towards Richmond to cut Lee's railroad communications.

On the morning of the 27th of April the Federal army began its march, and on the 28th reached Kelley's Ford. The river was crossed during that night and the next morning, with but slight opposition from a cavalry picket of the Confederates, and in the afternoon the army reached the Rapidan at Ely's and Germanna Fords. This stream was quite high at the time, but the men were ordered to strip, and fasten their clothes and cartridge-boxes to their bayonets. They were then marched into the river, the water coming up to the arm-pits, and in this way the passage was made during the afternoon and night, amidst the greatest merriment and enthusiasm. The artillery and trains were crossed on ponton bridges. This force consisted of Meade's (5th), Howard's (11th), and Slocum's (12th) corps, under the immediate direction of General Hooker. Couch's (2d) corps was left at United States Ford on the Rappahannock, to guard the river at that point, until Hooker, in moving down the stream, should uncover it, when General Couch was directed to cross the river, and rejoin Hooker at Chancellorsville. The turning movement was executed with success.

At the same time General Sedgewick commenced his movement. At dawn on the 29th he threw three bridges across the river, three miles below Fredericksburg. He at once crossed a strong column, and during the 29th and 30th made demonstra-

tions as though he intended to assault the Southern position in rear of the town.

General Hooker's dispositions were able, and well executed, but they did not deceive General Lee. He had expected from the first that the enemy would assail his left flank, his right being rendered safe by its position. He had stationed a part of Anderson's division, consisting of Mahone's and Posey's brigades and one battery in front of Ely's and Banks' Fords, in all about eight thousand men, and had picketted the river with Stuart's cavalry from United States Ford to Hinson's, in the neighborhood of Warrenton Springs, and had charged General Stuart to watch with great vigilance for a movement of the enemy from this direction.* Stuart performed his duty ably, and Hooker's column had scarcely reached the Upper Rappahannock before this movement was made known to General Lee. The news of the passage of the Rappahannock reached him at noon on the 29th.

On the morning of the 30th Hooker's troops advanced from the Rapidan. In the afternoon Chancellorsville was reached. Posey and Mahone's commands had been withdrawn by General Anderson from the river on the approach of the enemy, and concentrated at Chancellorsville, on the morning of the 30th, where they were reënfenced by General Wright's brigade, which had been sent forward by General Lee on the previous afternoon. In the afternoon General Anderson fell back from Chancellorsville to Tabernacle Church, where he could be reënfenced by General Lee, who was calmly awaiting the development of Hooker's intentions. He was well satisfied in his mind as to the nature of Sedgewick's movements, but, before sending further assistance to Anderson, it was necessary to be positive. By nightfall on the 30th he was convinced, from the fact that Sedgewick was sending troops to General Hooker,

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 399.

that the main effort of the enemy would be directed against his left, and he at once ordered General Jackson to march to Anderson's support with his whole command, with the exception of Early's division which was to remain and hold Sedgewick in check should he attempt to advance. Jackson was directed to "attack and repulse the enemy" as soon as he should reach Tabernacle Church.

General Jackson received this order about eight o'clock on the night of the 30th, and set out, about midnight, taking with him A. P. Hill's, Rodes', (formerly D. H. Hill's) and Colston's (formerly Jackson's, but more recently Trimble's) divisions. He marched all night, and reached Tabernacle Church about nine o'clock the next morning, Friday, May 1st.

When General Hooker occupied Chancellorsville on the night of the 30th, he was in high spirits. In an order issued to his troops he declared that "the enemy must either ingloriously fly, or come out from behind his defences and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him." So confident was he that victory would crown his efforts that he said to one of his officers during the night, "the Rebel army is now the legitimate property of the Army of the Potomac. They may as well pack up their haversacks and make for Richmond. I shall be after them." *

Chancellorsville, was not, as the name would indicate, a town, but merely a large brick residence, with a few out-houses lying near it. It was situated ten miles west and south of Fredericksburg, with which it was connected by a plank road and a macadamized turnpike. Looking towards Fredericksburg, the country, commencing a short distance from Chancellorsville, was tolerably open, but in every other direction it was covered with an almost impenetrable thicket of dwarf pines and stunted oak, and in many places the ground was soft and

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 275.

marshy. The road from Ely's and United States Fords, only a few miles distant, approached Chancellorsville through this gloomy region, which was commonly known as the Wilderness. A little over two miles to the right of Chancellorsville was a group of old buildings used for smelting iron, known as the Furnace. Just beyond Chancellorsville, in the direction of Fredericksburg, there was a ridge of a considerable elevation, which commanded the former place together with the Wilderness, and from which the Federal army could debouch into the open country immediately in the rear of Fredericksburg. This ridge was connected with Banks' Ford by a good road, and its possession was of the highest importance to the enemy.

General Lee did not suppose that Hooker would halt at Chancellorsville, but expected that he would press on and endeavor to gain this ridge, as such a course would bring the Federal army out of the Wilderness where it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to manœuvre, and place it in a strong position commanding the open country, and affording it an opportunity to communicate with General Sedgewick by a shorter and more direct road than that by which it had passed the Rappahannock. Believing that this would be Hooker's next movement after occupying Chancellorsville, Lee directed General Jackson to "attack and repulse the enemy" as soon as he reached Anderson's position.

General Hooker seems to have been anxious to secure the ridge, for on the morning of the 1st of May, he resumed his march from Chancellorsville, pressing back Anderson's weak command, in spite of its gallant resistance. Jackson arrived just as the enemy had occupied the ridge, and were pressing Anderson back. He immediately dispatched the brigades of Ramseur, McGowan, Heth, and Lane to Anderson's assistance, and held the rest of his force in reserve. His arrival was most opportune. Hooker had occupied the position Lee wished to

keep him from, and in doing so had gained an advantage which he should have retained at all hazards. No sooner, however, had the appearance of Jackson's command convinced him that General Lee, instead of "ingloriously flying," had determined to oppose his further advance, than he suddenly abandoned the offensive, and ordered the withdrawal of his army to Chancellorsville. His officers protested against the movement, calling his attention to the advantages afforded by the possession of the heights, and begged him to recall his order. He was incapable of further aggressive movements. His plan now was to fall back to Chancellorsville, take up a strong defensive position there, and await Lee's attack.*

His army fell back, as ordered, and Jackson, perceiving the advantage thus offered him, rapidly advanced his line and pressing the Federals heavily, threw a part of their force into some confusion.

General Jackson at once occupied the heights, and advanced his troops until they came under fire from the enemy's works at Chancellorsville. Not being willing to risk an attack upon Hooker's superior force in such a strong position, General Jackson withdrew for a short distance, and awaited the arrival of General Lee, who came up at nightfall, with the remainder of Anderson's division and McLaws' division.

During the afternoon, General Wright was ordered to reconnoitre the enemy's right. Moving to the south of Chancellorsville, he was joined at the Furnace by General Stuart, with the cavalry, who had been skirmishing hotly with the Federal army since its passage of the Rapidan. Wright, acting upon the information of General Stuart, promptly threw forward his brigade, and drove the enemy from a commanding position, back upon their main line. Night put an end to the contest.

*Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 279, 280.

III.

CHANCELLORSVILLE.

Immediately upon falling back to Chancellorsville, General Hooker commenced to fortify his position. He disposed his line of battle along the Orange Court House plank road, running east and west. His centre was at Chancellorsville, just where the road from Fredericksburg to United States Ford crosses the plank road. Immediately around Chancellorsville is a clearing, some three hundred yards in extent, and to the right and left is the heavy undergrowth of the Wilderness. The left of the Federal line was drawn back somewhat towards the river, and was posted in the Wilderness, while the right, also in the Wilderness, stretched away towards Orange County, about two miles and a half above Chancellorsville. The left flank was protected by the river, but the right was thrown out into the air. To protect his position General Hooker caused the construction of strong earthworks, which were made still stronger by felling trees along the entire front. The only weak point of his line was his left, his front being impregnable to any assault upon it. His army was disposed as follows:—Meade's and a part of Couch's corps held the left, Slocum's and part of Sickles' corps, the centre, and Howard's corps the right. The remainder of Couch's and Sickles' troops were held in reserve. This force was over eighty thousand strong with more than two hundred pieces of artillery.

By the time of General Lee's arrival, the position of the Federal army had been well ascertained by General Jackson. The situation of the Southern army was one which admitted of no

hesitation. The force which General Lee had with him at Chancellorsville was barely forty thousand strong, and the heights at Fredericksburg were held by about eight thousand under General Early. The army was thus placed between the column of General Hooker at Chancellorsville, and that of General Sedgewick at Fredericksburg; the former was over eighty thousand strong, and the latter numbered about twenty-eight or thirty thousand. If these two columns should seek to unite, they would be too strong to be resisted. If Sedgewick should advance upon Fredericksburg and drive Early from his position, he would have it in his power to fall upon General Lee's rear, while Hooker could advance upon the latter from Chancellorsville, and between such forces the Southern army would be crushed. Therefore, General Lee determined to prevent this by acting immediately. The withdrawal of Hooker to Chancellorsville, convinced him that the Federal commander expected to be attacked there, and he resolved that he should not be disappointed.

The plan adopted by General Lee was proposed by General Jackson. It was as follows:—General Lee, with the divisions of McLaws and Anderson was to keep Hooker employed during the next day, by threatening demonstrations against his front, while Jackson was to move with his corps around the Federal right wing, and by a sudden attack in that quarter double it up upon Hooker's centre, take his line in reverse, and cut him off from United States Ford, his line of retreat. The plan was bold and brilliant, worthy alike of the great soldier whose last conception it was, and of the greater general who accepted it.

On the morning of Saturday, May 2d, General Lee commenced his demonstrations on the Federal left, first assailing Couch's corps, then Slocum's in the centre, and gradually extending his attack from left to right, and so completely concealing his design that General Hooker was fully satisfied that the Confederate commander really intended to make the move he

wished — namely, a direct attack upon the intrenched position of his powerful army.

Meanwhile General Jackson, with his tried veterans, twenty-two thousand in all, commenced his march at an early hour. About a mile and a half from Chancellorsville, the column left the plank road, and marched by the Old Mine road in the direction of the Furnace. The front and flanks of the column were guarded by the cavalry under General Stuart. Upon reaching the Furnace, the 23d Georgia, Colonel Best, was thrown out to guard the road leading toward Chancellorsville, and the column pushed on.

It had been designed to keep the march secret from the enemy, but at this point it was discovered by General Sickles, whose position commanded a view of the road over a hill near the Furnace. This road, however, makes a sudden bend to the southward near this hill, so that when Sickles saw Jackson's column filing off in that direction, he supposed the Confederates were retreating towards Richmond. He immediately threw forward two divisions to reconnoitre, and these, suddenly surrounding the 24th Georgia, after the column had gone by, captured nearly the entire regiment. General Sickles telegraphed the result of his movement to General Hooker, and the latter was so firmly convinced that Lee was withdrawing, that he wrote to General Sedgwick, "We know the enemy is flying, trying to save his trains; two of Sickles' divisions are among them."* These same divisions, strengthened by Pleasanton's cavalry, and two brigades of infantry, one of which was taken from the Federal right, about the same time made an attack on the trains of Jackson's corps, but were driven back to their main line at Chancellorsville by the fire of Brown's artillery.

After this the column continued its march unmolested. The

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 284.

progress was slow, for the troops had great difficulty in moving through the wild country, and the narrow road was unsuited to the passage of artillery. Reaching the Brock road, General Jackson turned into it, and followed it until he arrived at the point where it intersects the Orange plank road, not far from the Federal right flank. Here General Fitz Lee pointed out a hill to him and told him that from it he could see the whole Federal position. Ascending the hill, he quickly reconnoitered the enemy's line, and then, turning to one of his aids, directed him to order the column to cross the plank road, by which movement they would gain the turnpike, and come directly in the rear of the Federal works.* The turnpike was reached about five o'clock in the afternoon, and the enemy's line was completely turned. General Jackson at once issued orders to prepare the troops for action.

The line was quickly formed. Rodes' division was deployed in line of battle, on the left of the turnpike, followed by A. P. Hill's and Colston's, the last two, with the artillery, moving along the road in column. The skirmish line was thrown forward about four hundred yards in advance, and between this line and Rodes' infantry were two guns of the Stuart horse artillery, under Captain Breathed.

Jackson's intention was to advance by the turnpike, which led directly to the rear of the Federal works, extending his line rapidly to the left, in the direction of the Rappahannock, by which he would drive the right wing of the enemy back upon Chancellorsville, and get possession of the road to United States Ford. In order to accomplish this his command would have to penetrate the depths of the Wilderness, yet this was but a slight matter in his and their estimation.

The reader will remember that the Federal right wing con-

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 413.

sisted of Howard's (formerly Sigel's) corps. It was strongly posted across the turnpike, and defended by a series of well constructed earthworks.

At a quarter past five o'clock, General Jackson ordered General Rodes to advance and attack the enemy. The men rushed forward with cheers, aiming straight at the flank of the right wing. Breathed's two guns opened a rapid fire, galloping in advance of the infantry, until the works were reached. Emerging from the woods, Jackson's men dashed upon the breastworks, driving before them the advanced forces of Howard, who were quietly cooking their suppers when the attack was made. Reaching the intrenchments they stormed them, in spite of the feeble resistance of the astonished Federals. Colston's division, following rapidly, caught up with Rodes' line, and entered the Federal works with it.

Colonel Crutchfield, Jackson's Chief of Artillery, now hurried his batteries to the front, and opened a hot fire upon the enemy's works at Chancellorsville. The infantry moved forward steadily, driving back division after division, until the whole 11th corps was flying in utter rout.

General Jackson led his troops in person. "Those who saw him declare that he seemed carried away by the excitement of the moment. He leaned forward on his horse, extending his arm far in front, as though he wished 'to push the men forward,' and his voice was heard exclaiming, 'Press forward! press forward!' every few minutes during the entire attack. When not thus mastered by the ardor of battle, his right hand was raised aloft with that gesture now familiar to his men, as though he were praying to the God of battles for victory."*

It was six o'clock when the first shot was fired, and for two hours Jackson's infantry drove the 11th corps steadily back upon the 12th, which held centre. By eight o'clock the advance

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 417.

had been pressed to within half a mile of Hooker's headquarters, when, in the darkness, the Southern line became entangled in the heavy abatis of felled trees with which Hooker had fringed the works around Chancellorsville. Rodes' and Colston's men became mingled in the greatest confusion so that it was impossible for either officer to distinguish his command. To remedy this the troops were halted, Rodes was directed to fall back and reform his men, and A. P. Hill's division was placed in front in the room of the troops thus withdrawn. As the line halted the Federal batteries opened from the cleared ground around Chancellorsville, which about this time presented a scene of the wildest confusion.

The panic stricken soldiers of the 11th corps rushed back upon their centre as Jackson's infantry swept down upon them. As the terror spread, men, horses, cannon, wagons, and ambulances became mingled in one frightful mass, which sped across the clearing around Chancellorsville with the force of a whirlwind—all aiming straight for the Rappahannock. Officers tried in vain, by threats, entreaties and blows, to stay the fugitives. They were deaf to everything. For a moment it seemed that the career of Hooker's army was ended, but just at this time the Southern advance was checked by the accident I have mentioned. But for this, Jackson would have slept that night at Chancellorsville, and his valuable life would have been spared to the country.

Hooker was quick to take advantage of the pause. Opening with every gun he could collect at the moment, twenty-two in all, upon the woods held by the Confederates, he endeavored to form his troops to resist the attack. Leading his old division forward in person, he became for the moment once more the impetuous soldier that had won such admiration even from his enemies. He posted this division at the edge of the clearing directly in Jackson's front, and awaited a renewal of the attack.

Fresh artillery was brought up and fifty pieces were soon sweeping the woods with an iron hail.

It was ten o'clock, and the moon had risen, lighting up the woods with a ghostly glimmer which paled before the fierce glare of the cannonade. Late as it was, General Jackson determined to renew the attack and get possession of the road to United States Ford. As his troops were forming for the assault, he became so anxious to ascertain the exact state of affairs in his front, that he rode forward to reconnoitre, giving orders to his men not to fire, unless cavalry approached from the direction of the enemy. He was accompanied by two of his staff, about half a dozen couriers, and two men of the signal corps.

Unfortunately, although the enemy were scarcely more than two hundred yards distant, no pickets had been established, and General Jackson found himself considerably beyond his lines, with nothing between him and the enemy. Had this important duty been performed, the sad results of this reconnoissance would have been avoided.*

As he finished his inspection General Jackson directed one of his staff to go back and order General A. P. Hill to advance. As he rode back to his lines, without giving any warning to his men, who had been ordered to look out for Federal cavalry, he was fired upon by a brigade of his own troops, and severely wounded, twice in the left arm, and once in the right hand. His whole escort, with the exception of two persons, were killed, wounded, or dismounted.†

The scene which ensued was agonizing beyond description. General Jackson was assisted from his horse by the survivors of the fatal volley, almost too weak, from loss of blood, to stand, and tenderly laid in the shelter of the trees by the road-

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 419.

† Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 420.

side. A messenger was despatched for a surgeon and an ambulance, but before these arrived, General Hill, who had also been exposed to the fire, came up, having succeeded in checking it. He was made acquainted with the calamity that had befallen the army, and instructed to assume the command of the corps. In a few minutes General Hill repaired to his post, and shortly afterwards it was reported that the enemy were advancing, and were within only one hundred yards of the spot where the wounded General lay. An effort was now made to assist him back to his lines, and, supported by two of his officers, one of whom had just come up, he walked slowly back, under a fearful fire of artillery which was suddenly opened from the enemy's batteries. On the way he passed his troops who were in motion to check the advance of the enemy, and every effort was made to prevent the men from learning who he was. His escort of officers, however, excited the curiosity of the troops who repeatedly asked who was wounded. The answer was invariably, "a Confederate officer," but one of his old veterans recognized him as he walked bareheaded in the moonlight, and, with a cry of anguish, exclaimed, "Great God; that is General Jackson!"*

During this time Jackson had not been able to drag himself twenty steps. He was so exhausted that his officers procured a litter for him, but had not gone far before their path was swept by a shower of grape and canister from the Federal batteries. One of the litter-bearers was shot through both arms, and the litter was placed on the ground. For several minutes the firing was terrific, forcing the entire party to throw themselves down on the ground for safety. As soon as the fire of canister veered around, another effort was made to convey the General to a place of safety, and at last he was placed in

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, p. 425.

an ambulance, and conveyed to Melzi Chancellor's house, where he received surgical attention.*

The firing to which General Jackson had been exposed did great execution in the Southern ranks, wounding, among others, General A. P. Hill, who was compelled to relinquish the command of the corps to General Stuart, who was called away from his cavalry for this purpose. Nothing further occurred during the night, which was passed by both armies in preparing for a renewal of the battle the next day.

During the night, the 1st corps, under General Reynolds, which had been withdrawn from before Fredericksburg, reached Chancellorsville, thus supplying the place of the 11th, which had been driven practically from the field. This left Sedgwick his own corps, twenty-two thousand strong, and, seeing the danger which threatened his army, General Hooker ordered Sedgwick to attack and carry the heights back of Fredericksburg at once, and move by the plank road to Chancellorsville, destroying any force in his way. He was directed to be at Chancellorsville at daylight the next morning, — Sunday, May 3d.†

As soon as General Jackson was conveyed to the rear, after being wounded, he despatched a note to General Lee, informing him of his misfortune. The messenger who bore the sad tidings reached General Lee's headquarters about four o'clock on Sunday morning, and found the Commander-in-Chief resting upon a bed of straw. When he heard of General Jackson's misfortune, General Lee exclaimed with emotion, "Thank God it is no worse! God be praised he is still alive!" Then he added, "Any victory is a dear one that deprives us of the services of Jackson, even for a short time."

The officer remarked that he believed it was General Jack-

* Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson, pp. 426, 427, 428,

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 291.

son's intention to have pressed the enemy on Sunday, had he been spared. General Lee said quietly, "These people shall be pressed to-day." Rising and dressing, he partook of his simple meal of ham and crackers, and prepared to set out for the field. Later in the day he sent to General Jackson the noble letter of sympathy which proved so comforting to the wounded hero : —

"GENERAL :

"I have just received your note informing me that you were wounded. I cannot express my regret at the occurrence. Could I have directed events, I should have chosen, for the good of the country, to have been disabled in your stead. I congratulate you upon the victory which is due to your skill and energy."*

General Stuart, after taking command of Jackson's corps, decided not to risk a night attack, as the ground was new to him, and the troops were in some confusion, but made his dispositions to renew the battle at daylight. The corps was formed in three lines, Hill's division constituting the first, Colston's the second, and Rodes' the third. The loss of their old commander had become known to the men, but instead of disheartening them, as had been feared, it seemed to fill them with fury.

* The affectionate admiration with which the great commander of the South regarded Jackson, was fully reciprocated by the latter, who once said to a friend, in speaking of his Commander-in-Chief: "General Lee is *not* slow. No one knows the weight upon his heart, — his great responsibilities. He is Commander-in-Chief, and he knows that if an army is lost it cannot be replaced. No! there may be some persons whose good opinion of me will make them attach some weight to my views; and if you ever hear that said of General Lee, I beg you will contradict it in my name. I have known General Lee for five and twenty years; he is cautious; he ought to be. But he is *not* 'slow.' Lee is a *phenomenon*. He is the only man whom I would follow blindfold!" — *Cooke's Life of Stonewall Jackson*, pp. 211, 212.

At sunrise Stuart opened his attack, his infantry advancing steadily upon the enemy's works, less than half a mile distant. With the shout, "Charge, and remember Jackson!" the men moved forward, and were soon hotly engaged with the enemy. As he brought his troops into action, Stuart saw that the ridge which had been occupied the day before by the 11th corps, afforded a fine position for artillery. Seizing it at once, he brought up thirty pieces, and opened them on the enemy's centre, inflicting heavy damage upon the troops massed there.*

The enemy resisted stubbornly, and with the hope of checking Stuart's advance, assailed his left with great vigor. Colston's division was hurried to the left, and was soon followed by every available regiment. The ammunition of a large part of the command now gave out, owing to its having been used in the action of the previous night, and, as the enemy pressed heavily upon the Southern left, it seemed that Hooker would yet recover his lost honor. The troops were ordered to hold their ground with the bayonet, if necessary. A gallant stand was made, and the enemy were checked and beaten back.

General Lee had not been idle. While Stuart was bearing down upon the Federal right, he was pressing the left and centre heavily with the divisions of Anderson and McLaws, moving gradually towards the right to unite with the second corps. Anderson's division was on his left, and this forcing back the Federal centre slowly formed a connection with Stuart by a thin line, just as the latter had repulsed the attack on his left. The army was now united, and General Lee gave the order to storm the Federal works around Chancellorsville.

The whole line advanced with vigor, and after a stubborn fight captured the works. The enemy rallied, and the Confederates were driven back. A second time the works were won

* General Stuart's Report.

and lost, and a third attempt met the same fate. The fire of the Southern artillery was redoubled, and the infantry swept forward in their fourth charge, over the dead and the dying, into the captured works, driving the enemy furiously towards the river, and at ten o'clock the Confederate flag floated in triumph over Chancellorsville.*

The scene was horrible at this moment. The woods, which were full of wounded, had been set on fire by the shells, and the fierce flames were roaring around the helpless sufferers, many of whom perished in this terrible manner. The Chancellorsville house was in a bright blaze, and the clearing was full of smoke and fire. The shouts of the combatants, the crash of musketry, the heavy discharges of artillery, and the fierce crackling of the flames, all gave a wild and terrible grandeur to the scene, such as is seldom witnessed, even on a battle-field.

As if in anticipation of his defeat, General Hooker had caused to be constructed on the night of the 2d, a strongly intrenched line in the rear of his first position. This new line covered the United States Ford. It was located in an angle formed by the Rappahannock and Rapidan, the right resting on the latter, and the left on the former river. It was heavily fortified, and the corps of Meade and Reynolds, which had been held in reserve during the battle, were formed in it to cover the withdrawal of the army into this place of refuge.

In spite of the strength of this line, General Lee resolved to attack it, and drive Hooker across the river. Accordingly he formed his army along the plank road, with his centre at Chancellorsville, and late in the afternoon was on the point of ordering an advance, when he was brought to a sudden pause by the news that Sedgwick was marching against him from Fredericksburg, having defeated General Early.†

* General Lee's Report.

† General Lee sent the following dispatch to Richmond on Sunday night :

IV.

MARYE'S AND SALEM HEIGHTS.

General Sedgwick received General Hooker's order to advance to his assistance, about midnight on Saturday. He at once left his position, three miles below Fredericksburg, and marching his corps by the flank, occupied the town about three o'clock on Sunday morning, skirmishing nearly all the way with a small Confederate force which retired before him. Shortly before daylight he threw forward a detachment to seize the works held by Early's command. This attack was promptly repulsed, and General Sedgwick ordered Gibbon's division of Couch's corps, which had been left to hold Falmouth, to cross the river, and join him. This gave him a force of not less than twenty-two thousand men.

The reader will remember that when General Lee moved from his position on the Heights of Fredericksburg, he left them in charge of General Early, who had under him his own division, and Barksdale brigade of Mississippians, of McLaws'

"MILFORD, May 3 1863.

TO PRESIDENT DAVIS:

"Yesterday General Jackson penetrated to the rear of the enemy and drove him from all his positions from the Wilderness to within one mile of Chancellorsville. He was engaged at the same time in front by two of Longstreet's divisions. Many prisoners were taken, and the enemy's loss in killed and wounded is large. This morning the battle was renewed. He was dislodged from all his positions around Chancellorsville, and driven back towards the Rappahannock, over which he is now retreating. We have again to thank Almighty God for a great victory. I regret to state that Gen. Paxton was killed, General Jackson severely and Generals Heth and A. P. Hill slightly wounded.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

division. This command was assigned the duty of holding the position of the entire army, and it was now menaced by a force almost four times its own strength.

The point at which the principal attack of the enemy was to be directed was Marye's Hill, just in rear of the town. This was naturally the strongest part of the Confederate line, and was made much stronger by powerful earthworks. The force charged with the defence of this position consisted of one regiment and three companies of infantry, and one battery of the Washington Artillery, the remainder of Barksdale's brigade being disposed along the heights between Marye's Hill, and Taylor's on the left, and Howison's on the right, where the left of General Early's own division rested. The line which Barksdale thus had to defend was about three miles in length.* Several batteries under General Pendleton, were posted on Taylor's and Howison's Hills. As soon as Early was informed of Sedgwick's movements, he sent Hays' brigade to reënforce Barksdale, who posted it on the right of the 13th Mississippi, near Lee's Hill.

About eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday, May 3d, General Sedgwick moved a strong column towards Hamilton's Crossing for the purpose of turning Early's right, and forcing him to withdraw from the heights. This attack was speedily repulsed.† About the same time an effort was made to get possession of Taylor's Hill, the extreme left of the Southern line. Just as the attack began, General Hays with four of his regiments arrived to reënforce that flank, and the enemy were repulsed. As they were retiring, General Wilcox, who had been guarding Banks' Ford, arrived on the left with three regiments of his brigade.

About eleven o'clock, Sedgwick threw forward a strong

* Letter from General Barksdale.—*Richmond Dispatch*, May 31, 1863.

† General Lee's Report.

column against Marye's Hill, which, the reader will remember, was defended by less than a thousand men. Moving on quickly in the face of a heavy fire from the Mississippians and the four guns of the Washington Light Artillery, the Federals reached the work, and leaped in among the defenders. Here a savage hand-to-hand fight was made for the hill, the Mississippians clubbing their rifles, and endeavoring with desperate resolution to hold the works. The enemy were too strong, the Mississippians, after a heroic struggle, were driven back, and the Federals gained complete possession of the hill. The Mississippians lost several hundred men, taken prisoners, and a number killed and wounded, and the company of artillery, with its guns, was captured by the enemy.

Simultaneously the ridge below the town was stormed and carried by Howe's division, and by noon the entire range which General Lee had held during the battle of the 13th of December, was in Sedgwick's hands. Early fell back to the southward, across the telegraph road, leaving the way to Chancellorsville open to the enemy, who, in obedience to Hooker's orders, set off at once in that direction.

Barksdale and Wilcox, having been cut off from the main body under Early by the loss of Marye's Hill, fell back in the direction of Salem Heights, the ridge which Hooker had abandoned on Friday afternoon. Sedgwick's advance was by the same road along which they were retreating, and as he pressed on, these gallant officers, appreciating the importance of retarding his march as long as possible, moved back slowly, contesting the road obstinately.

This was the news which reached General Lee just as he was about to order an advance upon Hooker's new line, on Sunday afternoon. In the moment of victory, his danger was greater than it had been at any previous time. Yet Lee was equal to any emergency, and the course upon which he immediately re-

solved, was one which in itself is sufficient to establish his fame as a great commander. He determined to leave a part of his little army to hold Hooker in check, and turn with the rest upon Sedgwick and drive him back over the Rappahannock. Having done this, he would renew the attack upon Hooker and force him back over the Rappahannock or destroy him. Sedgwick was rapidly nearing Salem Heights, which, if reached, would enable him to command the position of General Lee, and it was necessary to act at once.

Leaving Jackson's corps, under Stuart, to take care of Hooker, General Lee marched on Sunday afternoon with the division of McLaws and Mahone's brigade of Anderson's division to the assistance of Wilcox and Barksdale. Moving with great rapidity, he reached Salem Heights about four o'clock in the afternoon. His arrival was timely. Wilcox was gallantly holding the crest at Salem Chapel with his own and Barksdale's brigade, but this force was too small to accomplish much — being in all about two thousand men against near twenty-six thousand. McLaws' division was in the advance, and was at once ordered to form on the right and left of Wilcox; but before this could be done, Sedgwick made a vigorous attack with two of his divisions, gained the crest, and swept the Southern line with the fire of his magnificent batteries. His success was brief, however, for Lee formed his line quickly, and drove the enemy back from the heights into the woods. Night put an end to the battle. General Sedgwick's progress was checked, and what he had accomplished during the day had been gained at a loss of four thousand nine hundred and twenty-five men.

Monday morning, May 4th, found the forces still confronting each other. In order to finish Sedgwick, General Lee ordered the remainder of Anderson's division (three brigades) from Chancellorsville. This force reached him about noon, and he at once directed General Anderson to turn Sedgwick's left, and

cut him off from the river. Sedgwick's force was about twenty-two thousand, while Lee had about fourteen thousand in all with him, Jackson's whole corps being in front of Hooker.

Anderson commenced his movement promptly, but meeting considerable delay in getting into position, was not ready for action until late in the afternoon. At six o'clock General Lee opened his attack, pressing Sedgwick with great vigor, and gradually forcing back his left. The Federals resisted stubbornly, but the Confederates moved steadily onward. Unfortunately for the latter army darkness closed over the conflict just as the Federal left was giving way and the retreat of the enemy was about to be cut off. Taking advantage of the darkness, General Sedgwick withdrew his corps during the night, and retired across the Rappahannock at Banks' Ford, where he had laid a ponton bridge the day before. The Confederates followed closely, and Sedgwick had barely time to cross his troops and trains when Lee opened on him with his artillery. Fredericksburg was immediately reoccupied by Early's division, the small Federal force left on the heights being quickly driven over the river.*

Tuesday morning, May 5th, found General Lee on his way

* The victory over Sedgwick was announced to the Government in the following dispatch:

“HEADQUARTERS, 10 o'clock A. M., May 5, 1863.

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT DAVIS:

“At the close of the battle of Chancellorsville, on Sunday, the enemy was reported advancing from Fredericksburg in our rear, — General McLaws was sent back to arrest his progress, and repulsed him handsomely that afternoon.

“Learning that this force consisted of the corps under General Sedgwick, I determined to attack it, and marched back yesterday with General Anderson, and uniting with McLaws and Early in the afternoon succeeded, by the blessing of Heaven, in driving General Sedgwick over the river.

“We have reoccupied Fredericksburg, and no enemy remains south of the Rappahannock in its vicinity.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

to dispose of Hooker. He had relieved his rear from the danger with which Sedgwick had threatened it, and now he was about to strike the remaining portion of "the finest army on the planet" a blow which should end the campaign. During the afternoon he returned to Chancellorsville with Anderson's and McLaws' divisions, and commenced to make arrangements for an advance of his forces at daylight on Wednesday morning.

This attack was not to be made. The defeat of his army had completely vanquished General Hooker, and on Monday night, when it was certain that Sedgwick had been driven back, he determined to recross the river, and his engineers were instructed to prepare a new line to cover the crossing. This they constructed from the Rappahannock at Scott's Dam to near the mouth of Hunting Creek on the Rapidan.* On Tuesday afternoon a severe storm set in, swelling the Rappahannock to such a stage that it seemed that the bridges of the Federal army would be swept away. Towards dark Hooker commenced to send his artillery across the river, and during the night passed over with his entire army and trains.

At daylight on the morning of the 6th, the Confederates advanced upon the enemy's works, and as the skirmish line reached them the flight of the Federal army was discovered. The campaign was ended, and the Confederates were victorious at all points.†

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 301.

† The next day General Lee telegraphed the result to President Davis :

"CHANCELLORSVILLE, May 7, 1863.

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT DAVIS:—

"After driving General Sedgwick across the Rappahannock, on the night of the 4th inst., I returned on the 5th, to Chancellorsville. The march was delayed by a storm, which continued all night and the following day. In placing the troops in position on the morning of the 6th, to attack General Hooker, it was ascertained he had abandoned his fortified position. The line

The Confederate loss in the battles was severe. Out of an army of less than fifty thousand, ten thousand two hundred and eighty-one were killed, wounded, and captured. The enemy were still more unfortunate. Their loss in killed, wounded, and captured was seventeen thousand one hundred and ninety-seven — of which five thousand, exclusive of the wounded, who fell into the hands of the victors, were prisoners. Fourteen pieces of cannon, nineteen thousand five hundred stand of arms, seventeen standards and a quantity of ammunition were captured by the Confederates.

The campaign had been well fought, and brilliantly conducted, but it was dearly won at the cost of the valuable life of General Jackson, who died on Sunday May 10th.† His remains were carried to Richmond where they received all the

of skirmishers was pressed forward until they came within range of the enemy's batteries, planted north of the Rappahannock, which, from the configuration of the ground, completely commanded this side. His army, therefore, escaped with the loss of a few additional prisoners.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† The wounding and death of this great soldier belong properly to another narration, and have been of necessity passed by hurriedly in these pages. General Lee informed the army of its loss in the following order :

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May 11, 1863.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 61.

"With deep grief the Commanding General announces to the army the death of Lieutenant General T. J. Jackson, who expired on the 10th inst., at quarter past 3 P. M. The daring, skill, and energy of this great and good soldier, by the decree of an All Wise Providence, are now lost to us. But while we mourn his death we feel that his spirit still lives, and will inspire the whole army with his indomitable courage, and unshaken confidence in God as our hope and strength. Let his name be a watchword to his corps who have followed him to victory on so many fields. Let his officers and soldiers emulate his invincible determination to do everything in the defence of our beloved country.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

honors a mourning nation could pay, and were afterwards escorted to the spot he had chosen for his last resting-place, in Lexington, in the Valley of Virginia.

General Lee issued the following address to his army upon the close of the campaign.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May 7, 1863.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 5.

“With heartfelt gratification the General Commanding expresses to the army his sense of the heroic conduct displayed by officers and men during the arduous operations in which they have just been engaged.

“Under trying vicissitudes of heat and storm you attacked the enemy, strongly intrenched in the depths of a tangled wilderness, and again on the hills of Fredericksburg, fifteen miles distant, and by the valor that has triumphed on so many fields, forced him once more to seek safety beyond the Rappahannock. While this glorious victory entitles you to the praise and gratitude of the nation, we are especially called upon to return our grateful thanks to the only Giver of victory, for the signal deliverance He has wrought.

“It is therefore earnestly recommended that the troops unite on Sunday next, in ascribing unto the Lord of hosts the glory due unto His name.

“Let us not forget, in our rejoicing, the brave soldiers who have fallen in defence of their country; and, while we mourn their loss, let us resolve to emulate their noble example.

“The army and the country alike lament the absence for a time of one to whose bravery, energy and skill they are so much indebted for success.

“The following letter from the President of the Confederate States is communicated to the army as an expression of his appreciation of their success :

“ ‘I have received your dispatch, and reverently unite with you in giving praise to God for the success with which He has crowned our arms. In the name of the people, I offer my cordial thanks to yourself and the troops under your command, for this addition to the unprecedented series of great victories which our army has achieved. The universal rejoicing produced by this happy result will be mingled with a general regret for the good and the brave who are numbered among the killed and the wounded.’

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

The cavalry column which General Hooker sent out to operate on General Lee's communications, did not accomplish much as far as it was designed to injure the Southern army. The damage done to the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroad was repaired in two days, and the James River Canal was saved from injury.* The only mounted force which the Confederates could oppose to Stoneman's entire column, was W. H. F. Lee's brigade of two regiments. Yet this weak force prevented the enemy from injuring the Canal, and induced them to retreat sooner than there was any real necessity for. Still, the Federal cavalry destroyed a large amount of property, created considerable alarm in the country through which they moved, committed many outrages upon the people, and had they been bold enough to make a sudden dash into Richmond, — a part of their command were within three miles of the city — there is no doubt that the Southern Capital would have been captured.

General Lee took advantage of this raid to urge upon the Government the necessity of bringing the cavalry from North Carolina and the Southern States, where they were accomplishing nothing, and assigning them to duty with his army. Long before the enemy obtained control of the Mississippi River, he

* General Lee's Report.

endeavored to persuade the Government to bring horses from Texas for the use of his army. His suggestions were unheeded at the time, and, in spite of the lesson taught by Stoneman, and the grave declaration of General Lee that if the cavalry force of his army was not strengthened, the Federals would be enabled to make raids anywhere in the State without molestation, the Government continued to treat the cavalry with neglect,

VIII.

THE SECOND INVASION OF THE NORTH.

JUNE—JULY, 1863.

I.

PREPARATIONS FOR AN ADVANCE.

THE success of the Army of Northern Virginia was more than counterbalanced by the disasters which befell the Confederate arms in the West and Southwest. The army of General Bragg had suffered such a steady run of misfortune that the people of that section began to grow despondent. General Pemberton, by disregarding the orders of General Johnston, had allowed General Grant to shut him up in the city of Vicksburg, and lay siege to the place. Port Hudson had also been besieged, and affairs in the Trans-Mississippi Department were in a discouraging condition. Only in Virginia had any successes been gained.

The Confederate Government naturally desired to put an end to this state of things, and it was evident that it must adopt some decided measure if it wished to accomplish anything. At first the design of the Government seemed to be to reduce the army in Virginia to a strict defensive, and send a portion of it to Mississippi, with the hope of forcing Grant to raise the siege of Vicksburg. Between the 10th and the 14th of May, the

Secretary of War requested General Lee to send Pickett's division on this expedition. The folly of such a course at once presented itself to General Lee, and he protested against it, declaring that in his opinion the measure was a doubtful and dangerous expedient; that it was a question between the loss of Vicksburg and the loss of Virginia. Still, he stated that if the measure was still deemed necessary, he would send the division off at once. President Davis, however, sustained General Lee, and the matter was dropped.

A few days later General Lee visited Richmond, and during this visit, the condition of the country and the measures for its relief were discussed, and the plan of campaign decided upon. Two plans were presented to the Government, — either to re-enforce Bragg, so as to enable him to drive back Rosecrans to the Ohio, or to reënforce General Lee, and attempt once more the invasion of the North. There were many reasons which made the latter course the more desirable. The victories on the Rappahannock had raised the *morale* of the Army of Northern Virginia to the highest state, and the army was in better discipline than it had ever been. It was now a body of tried veterans, and, as General Longstreet once expressed it, was “in a condition to undertake anything.”* Besides this, the commissariat of the Confederacy was in such a condition as to render the speedy collection of supplies an absolute necessity, and it was thought that these supplies could be obtained in Pennsylvania more easily than elsewhere. It was known that Hooker's army was being decreased by expirations of enlistments and desertions, and that both the army and people of the North were somewhat despondent from their want of success in Virginia. It was thought, therefore, that the better plan would be to seize the favorable opportunity thus offered, and by an offensive campaign north of the Potomac, relieve the pressure

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 310.

upon the Western armies, and restore the advantage which was gradually being lost by the South. This time it was decided that General Lee should strike at Pennsylvania.

Having decided to adopt this plan, measures were at once set on foot to prepare the army for the execution of it.

The corps of General Longstreet returned to the army just after the battle of Chancellorsville. The death of General Jackson having made vacant the 2d corps, General Ewell was appointed to it, in compliance with a wish which General Jackson himself had often expressed during his lifetime, and at the unanimous desire of the army and people. A third corps was organized, and the command given to General A. P. Hill, and both General Ewell and General Hill were raised to grade of Lieutenant General. The ranks were refilled to some extent by a vigorous enforcement of the conscription, and the troops better provided with arms and clothing than they had ever been. The discipline was made more rigid, drills and reviews were regularly held in order to increase the efficiency of the army, and new batteries of artillery were added to those already in the service. By the last of May the army was seventy thousand strong, with about ten thousand cavalry. Longstreet's corps consisted of the divisions of McLaws, Hood, and Pickett; Ewell's corps, of the divisions of Early, Rodes, and Johnson; and A. P. Hill's corps, of the divisions of Anderson, Pender, and Heth.

These preparations were not unknown to the enemy. The Northern newspapers were filled with accounts of the manner in which General Lee was preparing his army for an invasion of the North, which information they professed to derive from Union men and "refugees" from the upper counties of Virginia.

Meanwhile the army of General Hooker had been very greatly reduced by the expiration of enlistments, and by deser-

tion. On the 13th of May, General Hooker, in a dispatch to President Lincoln, stated his force of infantry at about eighty thousand men. This brought the Southern army nearer to an equality with the Army of the Potomac than it was at any other period of the war.

II.

THE MARCH TO THE POTOMAC.

By the 1st of June the Southern preparations were ended, and all was in readiness for the advance.

The first thing to be accomplished was to draw the army of General Hooker from its position on the Rappahannock. General Lee so regulated his movements—having by this time come to a thorough understanding of the man he had to deal with—as to lead General Hooker to make corresponding manœuvres to meet them, and he hoped that in doing this he might tempt the Federal commander into some operation which might either expose his army, or open to the Confederates an opportunity for a dash upon Washington.

On the third of June, Longstreet's corps left its encampments at Fredericksburg and on the Rapidan, and marched for Culpepper Court House, and was followed on the 4th and 5th by Ewell's corps. A. P. Hill was left at Fredericksburg to deceive Hooker by making it appear that the whole army was in its old position.

The Federal commander, from the statements of the Northern press, and his own private sources of information, was convinced that something unusual was going on in the Confederate camp. He was not satisfied as to the nature of the movement, but was inclined to believe that Lee was trying to

entrap him, as he had done Major-General Pope not quite a year previous; and, in order to gain some light upon the subject, he threw Sedgwick's corps across the Rappahannock at Deep Run, on the 6th.

General Hill promptly disposed his corps to prevent Sedgwick's advance, and informed General Lee of the movement; but as it was evident, from the nature of Sedgwick's operations, that he had crossed the river merely for purposes of observation, General Lee allowed Longstreet and Ewell to proceed on their march,* and on the 8th these forces were concentrated at Culpepper Court House, to which point, the cavalry, under General Stuart, had been sent a short time previous to the commencement of the movement.

General Sedgwick's reconnoissance did not satisfy General Hooker, and as the latter was informed that Stuart was massing his cavalry at Culpepper Court House, he determined to send all the Federal cavalry, supported by about three thousand infantry, to break up Stuart's camp. To this end, on the 9th of June, General Pleasanton, who had succeeded General Stoneman, crossed the Rappahannock at Kelley's and Beverley's fords, with two divisions of cavalry, supported by two carefully selected brigades of infantry, and moved by converging roads upon Culpepper Court House. General Stuart, however, had left the Court House, and had moved his command to Brandy Station, in order to place himself on the flank of the army, and cover its movement in the advance northward.

General William E. Jones' brigade was thrown out towards the Rappahannock, with its pickets at Beverley's Ford. About five o'clock, on the morning of the 9th, the column of General Buford drove in Jones' pickets at Beverley's Ford, and crossed the river, while the remainder of the expedition, under General

* General Lee's Report.

Gregg, moved to Kelley's Ford. Advancing through the woods, the Federals encountered Jones' brigade drawn up to resist their advance. An attack was immediately made upon General Jones, who resisted stoutly until the arrival of W. H. F. Lee's and Wade Hampton's brigades, when the battle became fierce and obstinate.

As the enemy were reported to be moving on Kelley's Ford, also, General Stuart sent Robertson's brigade in that direction about the same time the advance of Buford's column was made known. The Federal force at this point was the column of General Gregg. Gregg crossed the river early in the morning, and drove back Robertson's brigade to Brandy Station, where the latter made a vigorous stand, but was compelled to withdraw from Fleetwood Heights, leaving them in possession of the enemy.

Information of this reached General Stuart while he was engaged with Buford in front of Beverly's Ford. Leaving Lee's brigade to hold the enemy in check, he moved back with Hampton's and Jones' brigades to Robertson's assistance. The fighting at the two points of collision was severe, and continued until late in the afternoon, when the enemy were driven at all points, and forced to recross the river with a loss of four hundred prisoners, besides their killed and wounded, which amounted to several hundred, three pieces of artillery and several colors. Stuart's loss was about five hundred, including General W. H. F. Lee, wounded.*

* General Lee's Report of "the Pennsylvania campaign." General Lee sent the following dispatch to Richmond, announcing General Stuart's victory.

"CULPEPPER, June 9, 1863.

"TO GENERAL S. COOPER:

"The enemy crossed the Rappahannock this morning at 5 o'clock A. M., at the various fords from Beverly to Kelley's, with a large force of cavalry, accompanied by infantry and artillery. After a severe contest till 5, P. M., General Stuart drove them across the river.

R. E. LEE."

This engagement revealed to General Hooker the presence of a much larger force in Culpepper than he had supposed, and to avert the blow which he supposed would be struck at his rear, he moved the 3d corps of his army, on the 11th of June, to Rappahannock Station and Beverley Ford, and posted his cavalry along the upper waters of the Rappahannock. He was still completely at a loss to divine Lee's object, and supposed that the movements of the Confederates were directed against his communications with Washington. Thus impressed, he turned his whole attention to guarding the line of the Rappahannock, and protecting himself against such a disaster as befell Pope in the summer of 1862.

Having thus succeeded in throwing his adversary off the scent, General Lee put his army in motion for the border. General Imboden's command had been directed to make a demonstration upon Romney, and to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, in order to draw attention from Ewell's movements, and prevent the enemy from sending any of their troops stationed on that railroad to the assistance of the garrison of Winchester. General Jenkins, with his cavalry brigade, was placed under General Ewell's orders for the purpose of coöperating with the 2nd corps in the advance into the Valley.*

On the 10th of June, General Ewell left Culpepper Court House, and marched northward. Passing through Little Washington, and moving with the utmost rapidity, he entered the Valley, and crossed the Shenandoah River at Front Royal. The roads leading to the Lower Valley had been strongly guarded by the cavalry of General Jenkins, whose pickets extended to within twelve miles of Winchester, so that no information of the movement could reach the enemy at that place.

Winchester was at this time held by about six thousand Federal troops under General Milroy, and a small force occu-

* General Lee's Report.

pied Martinsburg. The people of the Valley had been for some time compelled to submit to the numerous and dastardly outrages of this man, and they hailed with joy the prospect of getting rid of him. So far had General Milroy proceeded in his brutality that the Confederate Government had been compelled to order its forces to refuse him the rights of a prisoner of war if captured by them. He far surpassed General Pope in his inhumanity, and had neither military skill nor courage to recommend him for the post he held.

Upon reaching Front Royal, General Ewell detached Rodes' division, and directed its commander to move rapidly upon Berryville, dislodge or capture the Federal force there, and march upon Martinsburg, so as to cut off the enemy's retreat to the Potomac. Rodes at once set off, and Ewell, taking with him Johnson's and Early's divisions, hurried towards Winchester. Reaching the vicinity of the town on the 13th, he drove the enemy into their works, and rapidly bringing his forces into position, invested the town. As it was difficult to obtain favorable positions for his artillery on the hills which commanded the town, General Ewell spent all of the 13th in manœuvring and posting his batteries. The town was strongly fortified, and it was thought that Milroy would endeavor to hold it, but as it was important to clear the Valley at once, General Ewell resolved to storm the works the next day. Accordingly on the 14th, the artillery of Early's division opened a heavy fire on the fortifications, soon silencing the Federal guns. Towards dark Early's infantry carried the redoubts by storm, capturing the greater part of the garrison. During the night, Milroy escaped with the remainder of his command. The majority of these men were intercepted by Johnson's division, but the Federal commander managed to reach Harper's Ferry with a handful of men.

Meanwhile General Rodes had executed his orders to the

letter. On the 13th he surprised the garrison of Berryville, capturing seven hundred men, and driving the remainder into Winchester. Pushing on, he occupied Martinsburg on the afternoon of the 14th, capturing over two hundred prisoners, several pieces of artillery, and a considerable quantity of ammunition and grain.*

The movements of General Ewell took the enemy completely by surprise. They resulted in the freeing of the Valley from the presence of the enemy, the capture of Winchester and Martinsburg, with more than four thousand prisoners, twenty-nine pieces of artillery, two hundred and seventy wagons and ambulances, and a very large quantity of stores of various kinds. The Southern loss was small. The enthusiasm of the men was greatly increased by these successes. They saw that the mantle of their old commander had indeed fallen upon his successor, and they were also decidedly proud that in this advance they had sustained their old reputation for rapid movements by marching seventy miles in a little less than three days.

General Ewell made a brief halt at Winchester, and then pushed on to the Potomac to secure the crossings. The garrison at Harper's Ferry retired to Maryland Heights, and the

* The following are the bulletins announcing Ewell's success.

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY JEFFERSON DAVIS:

"June 15, 1863. — God has again crowned the valor of our troops with success. Early's division stormed the enemy's intrenchments at Winchester, capturing their artillery, &c.

R. E. LEE."

"CULPEPPER COURT HOUSE, June 18, 1863.

"GENERAL S. COOPER, ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL:

"General: On the afternoon of the 14th, General Rodes took possession of Martinsburg, capturing several pieces of artillery, more than two hundred prisoners, and a supply of ammunition and grain.

"Our loss was one killed and two wounded.

(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

Valley was once more entirely in the hands of the "Foot Cavalry."

The telegraph conveyed to General Hooker news of Ewell's movements, and convinced him that he had been deceived by his wary antagonist. On the night of the 13th Sedgwick's Corps withdrew from A. P. Hill's front and recrossed the river, and the next day the whole Federal army withdrew from the line of the Rappahannock, taking the roads leading to Manassas, and halting and intrenching in the neighborhood of Centreville.

A. P. Hill was ordered from Fredericksburg to the Valley, and as soon as he was satisfied of the withdrawal of the enemy from Stafford, he began his march.

General Hooker was still under the impression that General Lee was aiming at his rear, and the position which he selected was chosen with a view of protecting his communications, and, at the same time, covering the Federal Capital. General Lee, who had with him only the corps of General Longstreet and the cavalry, kept a careful watch over the Federal army during its withdrawal from the Rappahannock, hoping for an opportunity to attack it. Had General Hooker followed the advice of General Halleck, who suggested the propriety of striking a blow at the "flank of the moving column,"* he would have afforded the occasion for which the great Commander of the South so anxiously longed. Hooker, however, had too much good sense to expose his army in this way, and the desired opportunity was not afforded.

In order to draw the Federal army still farther from its base, and cover the march of A. P. Hill, who was now moving from Fredericksburg, Longstreet left Culpepper Court House on the 15th, and passing along the east side of the Blue Ridge, occupied Ashby's and Snieker's Gaps, and this movement having

* Report on the Conduct of the War. Second Series, vol. 1, p. 154.

succeeded in drawing Hooker away from Washington towards the mountains, A. P. Hill passed the Blue Ridge, entered the Valley, and took position at Winchester.

Thus the masterly strategy of General Lee had in less than a fortnight drawn the Federal army away from the Rappahannock to the Upper Potomac, and planted the three corps of his own army in strong positions within supporting distance of each other, and from which they could command an easy entrance into the enemy's country without risk of being molested on their march by General Hooker.

Still at a loss to divine his adversary's intentions, and anxious to learn the position of his forces, General Hooker threw forward his cavalry towards the Blue Ridge before which Stuart had disposed his troops to secure Longstreet's position. On the 17th of June, General Pleasanton encountered two brigades of Confederate cavalry, under Stuart, near Aldie, and was driven back with loss. The next day the enemy renewed the engagement, their cavalry being strongly supported by infantry, and Stuart was, in turn, driven back.* Becoming partially informed as to Lee's position, Hooker sent the 12th corps of his army to Leesburg, the 5th to Aldie, the 2d to Thoroughfare Gap. He moved forward cautiously, and then, as if realizing that he was manœuvring precisely as his adversary desired, confined himself to covering the Capital, and waited till General Lee should fully disclose his designs.†

This was soon done, for the advance of General Ewell into Pennsylvania had by this time rendered it necessary that General Lee should move the rest of his army within supporting distance of Ewell. On the 24th of June, Longstreet and Hill crossed the Potomac, the former at Williamsport, the latter at Shepherdstown. General Stuart was directed to remain

* General Lee's Report.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 318.

in Virginia, guard the passes of the mountains, observe the movements of the enemy, and impede and harass them as much as possible, should they attempt to cross the Potomac. As soon as the Federal army entered Maryland, he was to pass the border, moving either east or west of the Blue Ridge, as he should think best, and take his place on the right of General Lee's army as it advanced.* The absence of the cavalry during the march was severely felt by General Lee in the movements which are to be described, and its presence might have produced a different result.

III.

IN THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY.

I have stated that the command of General Imboden was ordered to operate against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He moved rapidly, and succeeded in destroying the road at important points, and on the 17th of June captured the city of Cumberland, Maryland.

General Jenkins' cavalry, after the investment of Winchester, were ordered by General Ewell to proceed at once to Pennsylvania for the purpose of collecting supplies. They were preceded by a part of Milroy's wagon trains, which had escaped. The frightened teamsters lashed their horses furiously through the streets of Chambersburg, and informed the inhabitants that the "whole rebel army" would be in the town before night. That night, June 14th, General Jenkins and his brigade arrived. The inhabitants of the town were kindly treated, but as some of them had fired upon the cavalry, after the surrender of the place, General Jenkins resolved to disarm them, and on the

* General Lee's Report.

morning of the 17th, required the citizens to surrender their arms. Some old muskets, sabres, and pistols, belonging to the Pennsylvania militia, were delivered to the Confederates by the citizens, together with a few shot guns which were the private property of the citizens. The muskets, pistols, and sabres, were almost all worthless, and General Jenkins, after selecting such as could be used, destroyed the remainder, but returned the shot guns to the authorities of the place.* On the 17th, General Jenkins left the town, and returned to Virginia, having collected during his stay in Pennsylvania, a large number of cattle and horses, and a quantity of provisions, which he sent back over the Potomac in safety. The moderation displayed by General Jenkins towards the people of Pennsylvania, deserves all the more credit, when it is remembered that his residence had been destroyed and his family rendered homeless by the enemy.

The appearance of Jenkins in the Cumberland Valley, together with the presence of Lee's army on the Upper Potomac, threw the North into a fever of excitement. President Lincoln issued a proclamation calling upon the States of Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, to furnish one hundred thousand militia to serve for six months, "unless sooner discharged," to repel the invasion. Even as far north as the city of New York, the most intense excitement prevailed, and troops were organized for local defence.

The Federal Government on the 11th of June sent Major-General Couch to Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, and gave him command of the Department of the Susquehanna. General Couch was an officer of great ability, but he was sent to command a department without troops for its defence. He issued an appeal to the Pennsylvanians to take up arms for the defence of their State, and Governor Curtin called on the mili-

* *New York Herald*, June 27, 1863.

tia to come forward, but the calls produced only a handful of militia, and it was not until New York sent several of her regiments to Harrisburg that General Couch was enabled to undertake anything like a defence of his department. Then he confined his efforts to the line of the Susquehanna, which he proceeded to fortify.

It was in the midst of this excitement, and while the Northern newspapers were threatening that Lee would find millions of men with arms in their hands ready to receive him, that General Ewell's corps began its advance. It crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown and Williamsport on the 22nd of June, and moved by two columns on Hagerstown. Passing through this place, General Ewell entered Pennsylvania on the 23rd, and, advancing up the Cumberland Valley, occupied Chambersburg the same day. As he crossed the State line, a militia force was observed drawn up at some little distance. This formidable body consisted principally of well-to-do farmers mounted on fat, sleek nags. The artillery battalion of Major Latimer was advanced to meet them, and at the second shot the gallant horsemen wheeled and set off to the rear at full speed, followed by the derisive cheers of Ewell's infantry.

Strict orders were issued by General Lee, previous to the advance of the army, requiring the men to respect private property. The citizens of Maryland and Pennsylvania were informed that such supplies as the army needed would be procured in the country, and paid for in Confederate money, at the prices prevailing before the entrance of the Confederate troops into the State. If they failed to bring in such supplies they would be seized, under authority: and any article necessary for the support of the army, if concealed, would be confiscated upon discovery. Those who declined to receive Confederate money would be given receipts for all produce furnished.

General Ewell followed this order, immediately upon his

arrival at Chambersburg, by requiring the citizens to suspend the sale of liquor during the occupation of the town, and to refrain from acts of hostility.

On the 27th of June the whole army was concentrated at Chambersburg. General Lee issued to his troops on that day an address commending them for the manner in which they had acted since their entrance into the North.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
CHAMBERSBURG, PA., June 27, 1863.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No 73.

“The Commanding General has observed with marked satisfaction the conduct of the troops on the march, and confidently anticipates results commensurate with the high spirit they have manifested. No troops could have displayed greater fortitude or better performed the arduous marches of the past ten days.

* The order referred to was as follows :

“HEADQUARTERS SECOND CORPS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
CHAMBERSBURG, PA., June 23, 1863.

“1st. The sale of intoxicating liquors to this command, without a written permission from a Major General, is strictly prohibited.

“2d. Persons having liquor in their possession are required to report the fact to the Provost Marshal, or nearest general officer, stating the amount and kind, that a guard may be placed over it, and the men prevented from getting it.

“3d. Any violation of paragraph one, of this order, or failure to comply with paragraph two, will be punished by the immediate confiscation of all liquors in the possession of the offending parties, besides rendering them and their property liable to seizure.

“4th. Citizens of the country through which the army may pass, who are not in the military service, are admonished to abstain from all acts of hostility, upon the penalty of being dealt with in a summary manner. A ready acquiescence in the demands of the military authorities will serve greatly to lessen the rigor of war.

By command of

LIEUT.-GEN. R. S. EWELL.”

A. S. PENDLETON, A. A. GEN.

Their conduct in other respects has, with few exceptions, been in keeping with their character as soldiers, and entitles them to approbation and praise.

“ There have, however, been instances of forgetfulness on the part of some, that they have in keeping the yet unsullied reputation of the army, and that the duties exacted of us by civilization and Christianity are not less obligatory in the country of the enemy than in our own.

“ The Commanding General considers that no greater disgrace could befall the army, and through it, our whole people, than the perpetration of the barbarous outrages upon the innocent and defenceless, and the wanton destruction of private property, that have marked the course of the enemy in our own country. Such proceedings not only disgrace the perpetrators, and all connected with them, but are subversive of the discipline and efficiency of the army, and destructive of the ends of our present movements. It must be remembered that we make war only upon armed men, and that we cannot take vengeance for the wrongs our people have suffered, without lowering ourselves in the eyes of all whose abhorrence has been excited by the atrocities of our enemy, and offending against Him to whom vengeance belongeth, without whose favor and support our efforts must all prove in vain.

“ The Commanding General, therefore, earnestly exhorts the troops to abstain, with most scrupulous care, from unnecessary or wanton injury to private property ; and he enjoins upon all officers to arrest and bring to summary punishment all who shall in any way offend against the orders on this subject.

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

There were some few violations of these orders, but they were too few to require notice. The citizens were protected in their property and persons, and guards given to such as asked

for them. The fidelity with which these guards discharged their duty is well shown by a single instance — that of a trooper with a half-starved horse keeping watch over a rich wheat-field, and preventing his own horse from cropping the grain. The conduct of the Confederate army in Pennsylvania furnishes a noble contrast to that of any portion of the Federal army in any part of the South.

The absence of General Stuart and the cavalry was now felt to a greater degree than ever. Since crossing the Potomac nothing had been heard of the Federal army, and for want of cavalry no reliable information could be gained as to its progress. In order to retain it on the east side of the Blue Ridge, and thus keep open his communications with the Valley of Virginia, through Hagerstown and Williamsport, General Lee ordered General Ewell to send a division east of South Mountain. Early's division was detached for this purpose, and proceeded as far east as York, while the remainder of Ewell's corps took the road to Carlisle.*

Preparations were now made for an advance upon Harrisburg, and the army was about to move in that direction when its progress was arrested by the first reliable news that reached it, after passing the Potomac, concerning the progress of the Federal army.

As soon as he was satisfied that General Lee had passed the border, General Hooker crossed the Potomac at Edwards' Ferry, on the 25th and 26th of June, and moved towards Frederick, a position of great importance, as it would enable him either to pass South Mountain and intercept Lee's communications, or move northward toward the Susquehanna should Lee advance upon Harrisburg. General Hooker's design was to adopt the former plan, and plant his army upon Lee's line of retreat. For this purpose he advanced his left wing to Middle-

* General Lee's Report.

ton, and sent the 12th corps, under General Slocum, to Harper's Ferry. He intended that the garrison of that post, eleven thousand strong, should unite with Slocum, and threaten Lee's rear by a movement towards Chambersburg.* This plan of taking away the garrison of Harper's Ferry, involved General Hooker in a quarrel with General Halleck, and on the 27th of June, Hooker requested to be relieved from the command of the army. His request was granted, and on the 28th he was succeeded by Major-General George G. Meade.

The new commander was almost a stranger to the Northern people, though enjoying, to an unusual degree, the confidence of the army with which he had been identified since its organization. He was an able, energetic, and cautious commander, who weighed well the chances of success before committing himself to any undertaking. Though General Meade never rose to the height of a great soldier, he was a man who understood his profession too thoroughly to fail to do honor to it, and his appointment was one of the wisest ever made by his Government, which also had the good sense to refrain from trammelling him with instructions to pursue any definite policy, leaving him to be guided by the necessities of the situation. General Meade found the army lying in the vicinity of Frederick City, with its left thrown out at Middleton.

This was the situation of the Federal army when, on the night of the 29th of June, General Lee was informed that its advanced force was beyond Middleton, threatening to move over the mountains and assail his communications. Ewell was at York and Carlisle with his corps, and Stuart was still absent with the cavalry.

To draw the enemy away from the Potomac, General Lee resolved to concentrate his army east of the mountains. Accordingly Generals Longstreet and Hill were directed to move

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 321, 324.

from Chambersburg to Gettysburg, and General Ewell was recalled from York and Carlisle, and ordered to the same point. The march was conducted very leisurely, as the movements of the Federal army were unknown. Had Stuart been retained with the army, Lee would have been informed of his adversary's march, and would have hastened to occupy Gettysburg before Meade could reach it.

Meanwhile General Stuart had hung upon the flanks and rear of the Federal army while it remained in Virginia, but he found it impossible to delay its march to any perceptible degree. On the 27th of June he occupied Fairfax Court House, capturing a quantity of stores. As he could not delay the enemy, however, he crossed the Potomac at Seneca Falls, and, moving east of Meade's army, passed through Westminster, and reached Carlisle just after the departure of General Ewell for Gettysburg. The route he pursued prevented him from being of any service to General Lee until he reached Carlisle, as Meade's army was between him and his commander previous to his arrival at that point.

Meanwhile General Meade had learned that General Lee was moving east of the mountains, and supposing that the Confederate commander would seek to attack him, he set about selecting a favorable position in which to receive the assault. He chose the general line of Pipe Creek, "on the dividing ridge between the Monocacy and the waters running into the Chesapeake Bay," as the best defensive position, though he determined to be guided, in occupying it, by the movements of his adversary.* He learned General Lee's presence east of South Mountain on the night of the 30th, and at once ordered the right wing of his army (the 6th corps) to Manchester, in the rear of Pipe Creek; the 2d corps was directed to move on Taneytown, accompanied by the headquarters of the army; the

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 326.

centre (the 12th and 5th corps) were to march to Two Taverns and Hanover, a little beyond Pipe Creek; while the left wing (the 1st, 3d, and 11th corps) under General Reynolds, was to advance upon Gettysburg, this last point being considered the most favorable position nearest Lee's line of march. These movements were to commence at sunrise the next day. Thus both armies were aiming for the same point, — Lee to occupy Gettysburg with his whole force, because of its strategic importance in commanding his line of retreat, and Meade to occupy it with only his left wing, until the rest of his army could take position on Pipe Creek, for he was not aware then of the greater advantages offered by the country around Gettysburg for defensive operations.* Had but the cavalry been present with the Southern army, Gettysburg could have been occupied by General Lee fully twenty-four hours earlier than he arrived there.

IV.

GETTYSBURG.

As I have shown, both armies were marching upon Gettysburg, one for a fixed and definite purpose, the other merely to cover its real design. On the 29th of June the Federal cavalry, under General Buford, which had been thrown out to observe the movements of the Confederates, occupied the town for purposes of observation. General Reynolds being ordered to Gettysburg, Buford held the town until his arrival.

In the meantime the Confederates marched leisurely, and on the night of June 30th, two divisions of Hill's corps bivouacked only six or seven miles from Gettysburg, on the Baltimore and

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 326, 327.

Chambersburg road, while Ewell halted at Heildersburg, on the Carlisle road, only nine miles from Gettysburg. At this time all of Longstreet's corps was west of the mountains, and but two divisions of Hill's corps were east of them. On the same night General Reynolds, with the left wing of the Federal army, encamped on Marsh Creek, four miles south of Gettysburg, with orders to occupy the town the next morning.

On the morning of July 1st, A. P. Hill and Ewell resumed their advance, and about nine o'clock Hill's advanced divisions encountered Buford's cavalry on the Chambersburg road, about a mile from Gettysburg. General Buford had been informed of the march of General Reynolds to occupy the town, and he disposed his forces to resist Hill until Reynolds could come up. By the skilful manner in which his artillery was served, he succeeded in holding his ground until the arrival of the 1st corps, which Reynolds had hurried forward to his assistance. General Reynolds was under instructions not to bring on an action at Gettysburg, but to retire to Pipe Creek if the Confederates appeared in force at the former place,* but upon his arrival there, he found Buford's cavalry so hard pressed that he was forced to bring up his main body to save them.

General Reynolds formed his line to the west of Gettysburg, just back of a small stream called Willoughby's Run. His troops were posted on the right and left of the Chambersburg road, partly in open ground and partly in a strip of woods bordering the stream. He brought with him the leading division of the 1st corps, and ordered the remainder of the troops to press on with all speed.

By this time only the division of General Heth, of Hill's corps, which was in the advance, had come up. This division had pressed Buford hard, and now made a vigorous attack upon Reynolds' infantry. The attack was made with such spirit that

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac — p. 331.

a part of the Federal line was driven back, but as the Confederates pressed on to follow up their success, they were themselves repulsed by an attack on their right flank, led by General Reynolds in person. In this charge the Confederates lost several hundred men, captured, including Brigadier-General Archer; while the enemy lost their commander, General Reynolds, who was killed by a rifle-ball. The death of this officer was a great loss to the Federal army. He was a brave and skilful soldier, an honest-hearted gentleman, and had conducted himself so humanely and generously to the people of Fredericksburg that they mourned his death almost as though he had been one of their own leaders.

The enemy also rallied and regained the ground from which they had been driven on their right, capturing two regiments of Davis' brigade of Mississippians. By this time the whole of the 1st corps of the Federal army had come up, and Heth was reenforced by Anderson's division of Hill's corps. Hill's troops pressed heavily upon the Federal left, causing it to make great exertions to hold its ground. Strong reenforcements were hurried by the enemy to this point of their line, and the battle went on fiercer than ever.

Meanwhile General Ewell had been marching rapidly from Heildersburg, warned by the sound of the guns that the two armies had come in collision at Gettysburg. His advanced division, under Rodes, came upon the field just as Hill was bearing down heavily upon the Federal left. Bringing his division promptly into action, screened from the enemy's observation, and seizing a commanding position on the Northern right, Rodes opened a determined attack on the Federals, who immediately brought up a division of infantry to strengthen this part of their line, and succeeded in capturing several hundred men of Iverson's North Carolina brigade.

Thus far the battle seemed evenly balanced between the con-

tending forces. It was now one o'clock, and the lines of the two armies had been gradually extended towards the right in a semi-circle around the town for a distance of several miles. The 11th corps of the Federal army now arrived, General Howard having assumed the command of the field immediately upon the fall of General Reynolds. Pender's division of Hill's corps reached the opposite line, about the same time, and a few minutes later Early's division of Ewell's corps also arrived and took position on the north of the town, across the Harrisburg road, causing the enemy to extend their lines still farther to the right.

About three o'clock Early made a furious attack upon the Federal right, under General Barlow, and drove it back with heavy loss, General Barlow himself being left on the field severely wounded. At the same time Rodes, whose position, opposite the Federal centre, was the key-point to the field, broke through the enemy's line. These successes were followed by a general advance of Hill's entire corps and Ewell's two divisions. The enemy were swept back, and driven through Gettysburg in confusion, with the loss of about five thousand prisoners, and several pieces of artillery. The Confederates followed in hot pursuit until checked by orders from their commander.

Meanwhile the death of General Reynolds had been reported to General Meade, and he sent General Hancock to take command of the left wing, with orders to hold his ground at Gettysburg if he found the position to be better than at Pipe Creek. If his opinion of the position was favorable, he was to inform General Meade, who would at once bring up the whole army; but if unfavorable, he was to retire to Pipe Creek.* General Hancock was too good a soldier not to see instantly that here was just the position Meade was in search of, but his first care

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 334.

was to rally his beaten troops in order to hold it. In this task he succeeded, the halt of the Confederates giving him an opportunity of doing so, and he formed his line along ridge the south and west of the town, known as Cemetery Hill.

This position was so strong that General Lee decided not to attack it until Longstreet and the remainder of Ewell's corps should come up. He sent orders to these troops to hasten their march, and efforts were made to discover the enemy's strength and exact position. It would have been better for General Lee had he pressed his pursuit and stormed the heights before Hancock had succeeded in rallying his troops. Such a movement would have wrested from the enemy the strongest defensive position ever assailed by the Army of Northern Virginia, and also have forced General Hancock to retire to Pipe Creek. Nothing but this strange hesitation on the part of General Lee enabled the enemy to hold the ridge.

The afternoon was spent in reconnoitering the Federal line, and by nightfall the opportunity which General Lee threw aside had passed by.

The town of Gettysburg lies in the centre of a small valley formed by several ranges of hills. North of the town the country is not so rugged, but south, east and west of it the hills are high and abrupt. To the westward, distant about a mile, is a ridge bordering the east bank of Willoughby's Run. About a quarter of a mile from the town, in the same direction is another considerable elevation, called Seminary Ridge. It was in the valley between these ridges that the battle of July 1st was fought. South of the town, and about a quarter of a mile distant, is the Gettysburg ridge, running due south. Just beyond the limits of Gettysburg, this Ridge makes a sudden bend to the eastward, and then turning to the right again, falls off towards the south, forming a hook. Where it bends to the eastward the ridge is called Cemetery Hill, from its being the

place of burial for the citizens of Gettysburg, and still farther to the right it is known as Culp's Hill. From Cemetery Hill the ridge is sharp and rugged for about three miles to the southward, where it terminates in a high, wooded peak, called Round Top, the lower or northern part of this peak being known as Little Round Top, or Weed's Hill. At the base of Culp's Hill flows Rock Creek, a small stream emptying into the Monocacy, while another creek, called Plum Run, flows along almost the entire front of the Cemetery Ridge from near Cemetery Hill proper, to beyond Round Top. The country west of the ridge is broken, and is commanded by it. Three prominent roads pass over the ridge. The Taneytown road, running due south, crosses it at the Cemetery; the Baltimore turnpike crosses the ridge east of the Cemetery, and runs southeast, while the Emmettsburg Road passes along the lower part of the ridge, and runs southwest. A line drawn along the crest of the ridge from the end of Culp's Hill to Round Top will measure a distance of four miles. The crest of the hill is mainly in tilled fields, with here and there a patch of woods, falling off gradually towards the rear, and affording excellent shelter for trains and reserves.*

During the night of the 1st, General Meade brought up the remainder of his army, with the exception of the 6th corps, which was hurrying on from Manchester, and posted it upon Cemetery Ridge. His right consisting of Slocum's corps (the 12th) and Wadsworth's division of the 1st corps held the right, on Culp's Hill; the centre, consisting of Howard's (11th) corps, and Robinson's and Doubleday's divisions of the 1st corps, held Cemetery Hill; and the left, consisting of the corps of Hancock (2d) and Sickles (3d) was disposed along Cemetery Ridge. Sykes' corps (5th) was held in reserve on the right, and Sedgwick was still to come up. The right and a part

*Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 336, 337.

of the centre of the line faced to the north, and the remainder to the west. The force with which General Meade held this magnificent position numbered (including Sedgwick's corps) fully one hundred thousand men, together with about two hundred guns.

The Confederates, after the battle of July 1st, occupied the town of Gettysburg, and the country to the right and left of it, lying immediately in front of and commanded by the position of the Federal army. Ewell was on the left, and held the town; Hill's corps occupied Seminary Ridge, and Longstreet, who arrived with two of his divisions on the morning of the 3d, was posted on Hill's right, his line extending across the Emmettsburg Road, directly in front of Round Top.

It was not General Lee's original intention to fight a general battle so far from his base of operations, and indeed, judging merely by the positions held by the two armies, it is strange that he allowed himself to be drawn into one. His army had before it the task of storming a rocky fortress stronger than that against which Burnside had dashed his army so madly at Fredericksburg, and every chance of success lay with the Federals. Still, when the two armies found themselves facing each other so unexpectedly, a change of some kind from their original plans became necessary.

The reader will remember that General Lee, in abandoning his march upon Harrisburg, and moving east of the mountains, had not done so for the purpose of attacking General Meade, but merely to draw him from the movement against the communications of the Confederate army. Indeed, when he set out upon the campaign, General Lee promised his Corps Commanders that he "would not assume a tactical offensive, but force his antagonist to attack him."*. It would have been well

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 340.

*

for him had he remained steadfast in this determination. He states his reasons for his sudden departure from his original programme, as follows :

“ It had not been intended to fight a general battle at such a distance from our base, unless attacked by the enemy ; but finding ourselves unexpectedly confronted by the Federal army, it became a matter of great difficulty to withdraw through the mountains with our large trains. At the same time the country was unfavorable for collecting supplies while in the presence of the enemy’s main body, as he was occupying the passes of the mountains with regular and local troops. A battle thus became, in a measure, unavoidable. Encouraged by the successful issue of the engagement of the first day, and in view of the valuable results that would ensue from the defeat of the army of General Meade, it was thought advisable to renew the attack.*

So far as his trains were concerned, General Lee fell into a strange error. A very large part of them were still west of the mountains, and those which had come up with the army might have been removed. The Southern line covered the passes of the mountains which would have secured the safety of the trains in moving through these defiles. Stuart was now up with the cavalry, and could guard them if necessary against any sudden dash of the enemy. The trains were withdrawn after the battle under more unfavorable circumstances, and there is no reason to doubt that they could have been gotten off as successfully before as after the engagement.

I do not mean that General Lee should have retreated without a battle, for I readily admit that such a step would have greatly injured his army. There were other movements by which General Meade might have been drawn from his stronghold and forced to assume the offensive. The reader will

* General Lee’s Report.

remember that the position of General Longstreet gave him control of the Emmettsburg road. This really placed the right wing of the Southern army between Meade and Washington. By moving at once upon Frederick, General Lee could have drawn the Federal army from Cemetery Ridge, and had General Meade attempted to interfere with the movement by attacking the Confederate commander, he would have afforded General Lee just the opportunity for which he had been watching. General Longstreet was very anxious to attempt this movement, and urged it upon General Lee, but the latter thought it better to make a direct attack.*

There are those who assert that General Lee himself was not free from the contempt entertained by his men for the army they had so frequently vanquished, and that he was influenced by it in his decision upon this occasion. This may or may not be true. It is certain that the decision was an error.

The morning of the 2d of July found the two armies confronting each other in their new positions. The greater portion of the day was spent in disposing the troops, and it was not until a quarter to five in the afternoon that the Confederates began their attack.

The enemy's force on their left, consisting of General Sickles' corps, had been thrown forward, during the morning, to secure what seemed to be a commanding position on the ridge traversed by the Emmettsburg road. Instead of gaining any advantage by this movement, however, General Sickles merely exposed the Federal left, and placed his own corps in a more unfavorable position than it had at first occupied. General Lee quickly detected it, and directed General Longstreet to get possession of it, as it would be of great service to him in his attack upon Meade's main line.

At fifteen minutes to five, Longstreet's artillery opened a

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 341.

heavy cannonade upon Sickles' position, and in a few minutes the firing was taken up by Ewell, on the left. Under the cover of this fire, Hood's division was thrown forward against Sickles' left, which curved back from a peach orchard on the Emmettsburg road towards Round Top. Making a sharp attack upon the enemy before him, Hood moved gradually to the right, and threw his right wing into the interval between Sickles' extreme left and Round Top. Little Round Top was, at this time, almost undefended,* and had Hood known it he might have seized it, and thus have gained the key point to the Federal line. This fact being unknown to him, however, he confined his efforts to the attempt to dislodge Sickles from his position, and approached Little Round Top cautiously, and with only a part of his division, making every effort, however, to gain the hill.

At this moment, however, General Warren, Meade's Chief of Engineers, who was inspecting this part of the line, seeing the danger which threatened the Federal army, by great exertions brought up a brigade of infantry and a battery of artillery, just as Hood's troops were nearing the hill.† Hood's men made a gallant attack, charging the enemy's line with great determination. The Federals resisted stoutly, and a hand-to-hand fight ensued for the works, in which both lost heavily, but which resulted in the repulse of the Texans, and in confining them to the rugged glen at the base of the hill, from which the enemy could not dislodge them. An effort was then made to turn the Federal left by working cautiously up the ravine between Round Top and Little Round Top, but this was also prevented by the enemy.

While these efforts were being made on his right, Hood had thrown his left against the centre of Sickles' line, and as soon

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 345.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 346.

as he had become fairly engaged, Longstreet had advanced McLaws' division to his support. These troops assailed Sickles so vigorously that he was soon compelled to call for reënforcements. Three brigades were sent to him, but they were powerless to hold the position. Longstreet directed his principal attack upon the exact centre of Sickles' line, and at a point near the peach orchard to which I have referred, and, pressing the enemy vigorously in this quarter, broke their troops and drove them from the orchard, gaining possession of the key points to Sickles' advanced line. The Federals made three or four desperate efforts to regain the orchard, but each onset was repulsed with heavy slaughter, and General Longstreet continued to advance his corps steadily.

To check his advance the enemy brought up a fresh division, under General Caldwell, and attacked Longstreet, who had reached a wheat field and strip of woods bordering the west side of Plum Run. A sharp encounter took place here, and the enemy seemed to be gaining ground, when Hood, who had by this time driven back Sickles' left and carried its whole position, came up on the right of the peach orchard. To meet him the enemy advanced Ayres' division of regulars, but the Confederates penetrated an interval between Caldwell's left and Ayres' right, and drove both divisions back upon their main line at Cemetery Ridge.

At the same instant A. P. Hill, who had been ordered to threaten the Federal centre, but to refrain from attacking unless a good opportunity presented itself, made a fierce attack with Anderson's division upon Humphreys' division, which constituted Sickles' right wing, and which, having been until that moment unassailed, had held its position. Humphreys was driven back quickly, and the entire advanced position of Sickles fell into the hands of the Confederates, General Sickles himself being disabled by the loss of a leg.

Still the Federal main line remained unassailed, and its strength was such that General Longstreet had but little hope of carrying it. His men pressed on, however, and reached Cemetery Ridge, where the enemy had been rallied by General Hancock. A partial attack was made and repulsed, and finding that night was rapidly approaching, General Longstreet withdrew his troops to the western verge of the wheat field, where they remained during the night.

While Longstreet was thus engaged on the right, Ewell, in obedience to General Lee's orders, made a direct attack upon the right centre of the Federal army at Cemetery and Culp's Hills. Moving out of the town as Longstreet became hotly engaged, he commenced to form his line. It was General Lee's design that this demonstration should keep the attention of the Federals too closely confined to their right to permit them to send reënforcements to their left where his real attack was to be made. General Ewell was delayed in his movements, however, and did not assail the enemy until near sunset.

Under the cover of his artillery, he advanced Early's division against Cemetery Hill, and Johnson's division against Culp's Hill. As Early marched out of the town the Union forces opened upon him with a battery of artillery, at a distance of eight hundred yards, but quickly gaining the open country, he formed his line and moved on under a heavy fire from twenty guns loaded with shrapnel and canister. This fire was so severe that the centre of Early's line gave way; but the right,* which was more sheltered from the enemy's fire, pressed on and gained the crest. The artillerists made a gallant fight for their guns, and succeeded in holding their ground until the arrival of reënforcements, when Hays and Hoke were compelled to fall back. Rodes' division had been ordered to support General Early, "but when the time came to attack, Rodes, not having his

* Hays' and Hoke's brigades.

troops in position, was unprepared to coöperate with Early." * Had his division been at hand to sustain the efforts of Hays' and Hoke, the lodgement gained by them would have been final, and the Federal right would have been turned.

On Ewell's left the attempt was more successful. Johnson's division, advancing up the gorge of Rock Creek, attacked the right of Meade's line at Culp's Hill, and after a sharp fight succeeded in securing a part of the Federal breastworks on the extreme right. The enemy had greatly weakened this part of their line to meet the attack of General Longstreet, and but for the approach of night, which now compelled General Johnson to suspend operations, the success in this quarter would have been pushed still farther. As it was, he arranged his command to hold the position he had gained in the Union works and which, if retained during the next day, would enable General Lee to take Meade's whole line in reverse.

When night came matters stood thus: Longstreet had carried the entire position in his front occupied in the morning by Sickles' corps, and Ewell had effected a lodgement on the crest on the Federal right. The enemy had suffered in the two days' encounters, the heavy loss of twenty thousand men, with many of their best officers killed or disabled. The Confederates had paid heavily for their successes. General Barksdale had been left, mortally wounded, in the enemy's lines, and many valuable officers had fallen, while the loss in killed, wounded, and missing was severe. Still the successes of the 1st and 2d, decided General Lee to renew the attack the next day.

During the night the enemy strengthened their position with earthworks, and prepared to recover that part of their line that had been wrested from them by General Johnson. A strong force of artillery was posted within easy range of Johnson's division, and the 12th corps and two divisions and a brigade of

* General Lee's last Report of the Gettysburg Campaign.

the 6th corps were ordered to take position to attack the Confederates the next morning.

At four o'clock on the morning of July 3d, the enemy opened a heavy fire from their artillery, and the infantry mentioned moved forward to drive Johnson from the ridge. Although so greatly overmatched, Johnson made a gallant resistance, but after a severe engagement of four hours was driven from the hill, and the enemy reestablished their line.

It had been General Lee's intention to strengthen Ewell, and make his main attack this time on the Federal right, but the disaster which befell Johnson rendered this inexpedient, and he now resolved to break the enemy's centre, and drive their two wings apart, and in order to effect this more easily he spent the entire forenoon in massing his artillery opposite the Federal centre. His plan was as follows: His artillery was to open fire at one o'clock, and silence the Federal batteries. A strong column of infantry was to storm the heights as soon as the firing ceased, and carry the Federal centre; the remainder of the army being held in readiness to move forward at any moment.

During the morning there was a lull, the Confederates made their preparations with vigor, and by noon had posted one hundred and forty-five pieces of cannon on Seminary Ridge, opposite Meade's centre. To reply to these batteries, the Federals, who could see the concentration of the Southern guns, lined the crest of Cemetery Hill with eighty pieces of cannon.

At one o'clock, General Lee opened fire from his batteries, and the Federal guns replied soon after. For two hours this tremendous cannonade went on without slackening, when the Federals, finding their ammunition running low, gradually ceased firing, and the Confederate columns of attack commenced to move forward.

The duty of carrying the Federal position was assigned to the division of Major General Pickett (which had been absent during the fight of the previous day), supported by Heth's division of Hill's corps, commanded by General Pettigrew. Pickett's division was less than five thousand strong, owing to the absence of two of its brigades, but was composed of the flower of the Virginia infantry, and was an object of pride to the whole army. Heth's division was made up principally of conscripts from North Carolina. The brigade of General Wilcox was also designed to cover Pickett's right flank during his advance. The attacking column was about thirteen thousand strong, and the command of the whole was given to General Pickett.

As the Federal guns ceased firing, Pickett, having formed his line, moved forward across the open plain in front of the enemy's works. Kemper's and Garnett's brigades were in front, with Armistead following close behind. Pettigrew was moving on the left, and Wilcox with his troops in columns of battalions following on the right. As steadily, as if marching on parade, the columns advanced, and when they reached the Emmettsburg Road the Confederate batteries became silent, as they could no longer fire safely over the heads of the advancing infantry. The enemy greeted their approach with terrific discharges of grape and canister, before which the Confederates went down by scores. Still the line pressed on, winning the admiration of even its foes by the magnificence of its advance. Suddenly, when the crest was almost reached, the hill blazed with the fire of the Federal infantry, and Pettigrew's division, in spite of the efforts of its gallant commander to rally it, broke in dismay and fled from the field, leaving two thousand prisoners and fifteen standards in the hands of the Union Army.

But the Virginians pressed on, led by their heroic commander, with his long hair waving in the breeze, and his sword pointing straight on to the enemy.

“Steady they step adown the slope,
Steady they climb the hill,
Steady they load, steady they fire,
Marching right onward still,”

while the iron hail-storm sweeping through their ranks strewed the earth with their dead and dying. There was no wavering among them, for they were fighting for the honor of the Old Dominion. The gaps in their line were closed up as fast as made, and with wild cheers of triumph they gained the crest, drove the Federals from the works, and amid the gloom and smoke General Lee saw through his glass the blue flag of Virginia waving from the crest of Cemetery Ridge.

The triumph was dearly won, and was as brief as it was glorious. The enemy rallied on their second line, and poured a withering fire into the captured works now held by the Virginians. Glancing around to look for his supports, Pickett found that he was alone, that Pettigrew's men had fled and left him to his fate. His grand charge had been in vain. Every brigade commander and all, but one field officer, had fallen, and it was by a miracle only that General Pickett himself had escaped. The enemy were rapidly thinning his ranks, and it was vain to attempt to hold the works. All that courage could do had been done, and it remained but to save the remnant of the division. Reluctantly he gave the order to fall back; and the command retired slowly and sullenly over the ground it had immortalized.

General Wilcox, who had failed to move far enough during Pickett's advance, now attempted to carry the heights, but his gallant and rash assault was repulsed.

Of the five thousand men with which Pickett began his charge, nearly thirty-five hundred were killed, wounded, or in the hands of the enemy. Of his three brigade commanders, General Garnett was killed, General Armistead mortally

wounded, and General Kemper severely wounded and a prisoner. Out of fourteen field officers, but one returned from the heights. The charge was fruitless, but the Federals purchased their success at a high price. Many valuable officers were killed or wounded, Generals Hancock and Gibbon being among the latter, and several thousand of their infantry were put *hors du combat*.

From his position on Seminary Ridge, General Lee had witnessed the charge. As he saw his men driven back from the heights, it is said that he placed his finger for a moment thoughtfully between his lips, the only sign of perplexity he was ever known to exhibit. Then, realizing the importance of the occasion, he rode forward promptly among the broken troops to rally them. Calmly, as though far beyond the reach of danger, he spoke to them words of cheer and comfort. "Never mind," he said, as he urged them to re-form "We'll talk of this afterwards. Now we want all good men to rally. All this will come right in the end." His simple appeals were answered with enthusiasm. The men, even the wounded, returned to their places with cheers for their beloved commander, and a foreign officer, who was present as a spectator states that in this dark hour he heard nothing but admiration for Pickett's noble charge, and that the men assured him of their firm faith in General Lee, in such homely phrases, as, "We've not lost confidence in the old man: this day's work won't do him no harm, 'Uncle Robert' will get us into Washington yet."*

General Lee was fully alive to the extent of his disaster. To Colonel Freemantle of the English army, he said, "This has been a sad day for us, Colonel, — a sad day; but we can't expect always to gain victories." But he rose grandly above his disaster when, in reply to General Wilcox, who came to

* Colonel Freemantle's Diary, published in Blackwood's Magazine for September 1863.

report the failure of his attack, and who could hardly speak for emotion, when telling the sufferings of his men, he said quietly and cheerfully, "Never mind, General; all this has been my fault; it is I that have lost this fight, and you must help me out of it in the best way you can." All the while his calmness and cheerfulness remained unshaken.*

It was thought that the enemy might attempt to follow up Pickett's repulse by an advance upon Longstreet's line, and preparations were made to receive them. Everything was done promptly and rapidly; "yet there was much less noise, fuss, or confusion of orders," says Colonel Freemantle, "than at any ordinary field-day." The enemy did not advance, however. Many of the ablest officers of the Federal army were in favor of such a movement, but General Meade wisely decided not to risk the advantage he had gained, — wisely, because an advance upon his part would have been repulsed with heavy loss to him, inasmuch as Longstreet had two fresh divisions — McLaws' and Hood's — lying in readiness to meet him, together with a strong force of artillery. Indeed, General Longstreet was anxious that Meade should attack him.† The attack was not made, however, and the remainder of the day passed away in comparative quiet.

During the night the corps of General Ewell was withdrawn from the town and posted on Seminary Ridge, upon which the whole army proceeded to intrench itself. The next morning, July 4th, the enemy reoccupied the town. General Lee held his position during the day. Though no longer able to attack his adversary, he was perfectly willing to be assailed by him. General Meade remained quiet, however, and about noon General Lee commenced to remove the arms from a portion of the field, and such of his wounded as could be transported. The

* Colonel Freemantle's Narrative.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 364.

wounded were placed in ambulances and wagons, and sent back to the Potomac under a strong escort, and the prisoners, four thousand in number, were also sent in that direction.

It was now evident to General Lee that he could no longer hope for a successful issue to the campaign. The Federal army was too strong to be driven from its position, and it was not advisable to attempt to hold the country in its presence. The ammunition of the Southern army was almost exhausted, and it was difficult to procure provisions. These things made a withdrawal imperative, and that movement involved the termination of the invasion of the North.

The losses in the battle of Gettysburg were heavy on both sides. On the side of the Confederates, they were over twenty thousand.* The Federals lost twenty-three thousand one hundred and ninety killed, wounded, and captured.

V.

THE RETREAT INTO VIRGINIA.

During the 4th of July General Lee held his position on Seminary Ridge, his line covering the Chambersburg and Fairfield roads. These highways lead westward from Gettysburg, and passing through the South Mountain range, enter the Cumberland Valley at a distance of seven miles from each other. During the night of the 4th, the Confederate army commenced to retire by these roads, but its progress was so

* General Meade reports the captures of prisoners by his army at thirteen thousand six hundred and twenty-one; but it must be remembered that General Lee left most of his wounded in the enemy's hands. He also detailed a large force of nurses to remain with his wounded. These were seized by the Federals and treated as prisoners of war. This accounts for the large number of prisoners.

much delayed by a severe storm that the rear-guard did not move from Gettysburg until the morning of the 5th.

It was a difficult task that now presented itself to the Confederate commander. His army was inferior in strength to that of the enemy, who had the advantage of railroad communication from the Eastern States to the Upper Potomac, and might plant a force, independent of Meade's army, across his line of retreat. Besides this, he was burdened with four thousand prisoners, and a train fifteen miles long. He had a long march before him, and it was certain that General Meade, elated by his victory, would endeavor to cut him off from the Potomac. To conduct his army through all of its dangers, and place it safely in Virginia once more, was a task requiring not only great skill, but great moral courage. Fortunately the troops had not lost the slightest particle of their confidence in their great commander, and while he was at their head they were sure of coming safely, if not triumphantly, through any danger, any trial.

General Meade discovered General Lee's retreat on the morning of the 5th of July, and at once sent Sedgwick's corps in pursuit along the Fairfield road, and dispatched his cavalry after the Confederates by the Harrisburg road. Sedgwick came up with the Confederate rear-guard late in the afternoon, at the point where the Fairfield road passes through the South Mountain. He found the Confederate position very strong, but his advance was cut short at this moment by an order from General Meade to return. Meade had decided to adopt the route east of the mountains which was nearly twice the length of that by which Lee was retreating. With the hope of intercepting the Confederates, he ordered General French, who was at Frederick with the garrison of Harper's Ferry, to seize the lower passes of the South Mountain before Lee could occupy them, and also to reoccupy Harper's Ferry. General

French promptly executed these instructions, and also sent his cavalry to Falling Waters where they destroyed a Confederate ponton-bridge. General Meade followed cautiously with his army, which, during the march, was reënforced by French's division and numerous other troops sent from Washington and Baltimore, making it fully as strong as it was before the battle of Gettysburg. By the tenth of July his army was at Antietam Creek.

Meanwhile General Lee had been marching rapidly to secure the crossings of the Potomac. A part of his train moved by the Fairfield road, and the rest through Cashtown, the whole in advance of the army, and guarded by General Imboden's command. The great length of the train in passing through the mountains exposed it to the Federal cavalry which had been sent into the Cumberland Valley, and as the wagons defiled from the passes, the Federals made a dash at them, capturing a number of wagons and ambulances before they could be driven off, but inflicting no serious injury upon the train, which reached the Potomac at Williamsport in safety.

On the 6th, the enemy's cavalry made another attack on the trains, this time at Williamsport, and were repulsed by General Imboden's command. General Stuart, then coming up with his cavalry, drove them off in another attempt, and pursued them several miles in the direction of Boonsboro.* The Confederate force in these engagements was so small that the teamsters gallantly armed themselves and took part in the fight.

The army followed slowly in the rear of the trains. The roads were in such bad condition that the advance did not reach Hagerstown until the afternoon of the 6th. The remainder of the troops arrived during the morning of the 7th.

General Lee now found himself confronted by a new difficulty. The heavy rains had swollen the Potomac to such an extent

* General Lee's Report.

that it was no longer fordable, and the only ponton-bridge his army possessed had been destroyed by the enemy. The Federal army was some distance behind, having in fact only reached Frederick, and had it been possible to cross the stream the Confederates might have returned to Virginia unmolested. This being out of his power, there was nothing for General Lee to do but to await the return of the river to its usual condition. He accordingly selected a strong position, with his right resting on the Potomac at Falling Waters and his left at Hagerstown, this line giving him command of the crossings at Falling Waters and Williamsport. Earthworks were thrown up, and every precaution taken to resist the enemy should they attack upon their arrival. A part of the old ponton-bridge was recovered, and by great exertions a new bridge was constructed by the 13th.

From the 7th until the 13th, the army was in great danger. Its ammunition was almost exhausted, and the supplies collected in Pennsylvania were running low. It was cut off from the southern shore by the high water and the loss of the bridge, and it was found almost impossible to procure anything from the Virginia side, while the high water also flooded the mills and prevented them from being used. No reenforcements could be received, and it was known that Meade's army was approaching from Frederick. No one could tell when the water would fall. But for the rains the river might have been crossed while Meade's army was at Frederick; now the passage would have to be made in the presence of the enemy's whole force.

The Federal army appeared before the Confederate position on the 12th, but, contrary to General Lee's expectation, made no attack. No one doubted that General Meade, upon finding Lee in such a delicate situation, and with his own army so strongly reenforced, would at least endeavor to prevent the latter from crossing the river, if he did not attempt to destroy him.

Meade, however, hesitated, and commenced to fortify his own line, intimidated by the natural and artificial strength of Lee's position.

By mid-day on the 13th, the Potomac was found to be fordable, although very deep, and the bridge being in readiness for the passage of the artillery and trains, General Lee ordered the withdrawal into Virginia to be commenced that night. Ewell's corps forded the river at Williamsport, while the corps of Longstreet and Hill crossed on the bridge at Falling Waters. The roads were in a such a horrible state that the troops did not reach the bridge until after daylight on the morning of the 14th, and it was one o'clock in the afternoon before they were all over and the bridge removed. The enemy offered no material opposition, and the crossing was effected with complete success. Only a few disabled wagons, and two guns which sank too deep into the mud to be dragged off by their horses, were left behind.* The guns could have been saved, had fresh horses been at hand, but before they could be procured the army passed by.

The march to the river on the Maryland side was made in the midst of a drenching storm, and it was so slow and tedious that some of the men threw themselves down by the roadside to rest. Overcome with fatigue many of them fell asleep, were missed in the darkness by the officers sent to collect them, and fell into the hands of the enemy.† These were the only prisoners taken by General Meade, besides a few stragglers.

* General Lee's Report.

† The assertion made by General Meade in a dispatch published soon afterwards as to the captures from the Confederate army, drew from General Lee the following letter, which sets the matter at rest.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
July 21, 1863.

“GENERAL S. COOPER, *Adjutant and Inspector-General, C. S. A., Richmond, Va.*

“GENERAL: I have seen in Northern papers what purported to be an official dispatch from General Meade, stating that he had captured a brigade of infantry, two pieces of artillery, two caissons and a large number of small

The disappointment of the Northern Government and people was extreme when they learned that General Lee had succeeded in reaching Virginia. They were confident, up to the receipt of this intelligence, that Meade would destroy the Southern army. General Lee himself fully expected an attack, and was surprised to see Meade remain so quiet.* General Meade,

arms, as this army retired to the south bank of the Potomac, on the 13th and 14th instants.

"This dispatch has been copied into the Richmond papers, and as its official character may cause it to be believed, I desire to state that it is incorrect. The enemy did not capture any organized body of men on that occasion, but only stragglers and such as were left asleep on the road, exhausted by the fatigue and exposure of one of the most inclement nights I have ever known at this season of the year. It rained without cessation, rendering the road by which our troops marched to the bridge at Falling Waters, very difficult to pass, and causing so much delay that the last of the troops did not cross the river at the bridge until 1 P. M., on the 14th. While the column was thus detained on the road, a number of men, worn down by fatigue, lay down in barns, and by the roadside, and though officers were sent back to arouse them, as the troops moved on, the darkness and rain prevented them from finding all, and many were in this way left behind. Two guns were left in the road. The horses that drew them became exhausted, and the officers went forward to procure others. When they returned, the rear of the column had passed the guns so far that it was deemed unsafe to send back for them, and they were thus lost. No arms, cannon or prisoners were taken by the enemy in battle, but only such as were left behind under the circumstance I have described. The number of stragglers thus lost I am unable to state with accuracy, but it is greatly exaggerated in the dispatch referred to.

I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

* General Lee was so confident that Meade was approaching the Potomac for the purpose of attacking him, that the day before the arrival of the Federal army he issued the following order to his troops, his headquarters being then at Hagerstown:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA.
July 11, 1863.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 16.

"After the long and trying marches, endured with the fortitude that has ever characterized the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia, you have

however, seems to have preferred to remain on the defensive which had served him so well at Gettysburg.

On the 15th of July General Lee moved back from the Potomac to Bunker Hill, in the vicinity of Winchester. On the 17th a large detachment of Federal cavalry, which had crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry, advanced to the neighborhood of Martinsburg. They were attacked by General Fitz Lee at Kearneysville, and driven back over the river with heavy loss.

General Meade now determined to pursue the Confederate army, and attempt to cut it off from Richmond, or force it to a general engagement before it could move east of the Blue Ridge. He crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry and Berlin on the 17th and 18th of July, and moving along the base of the mountains, endeavored to occupy the passes in advance of the Confederates. In this he was only partially successful; for, as soon as he was informed of Meade's advance, General Lee commenced to retire up the Valley. His progress was

penetrated to the country of our enemies, and recalled to the defences of their own soil those who were engaged in the invasion of ours. You have fought a fierce and sanguinary battle, which, if not attended with the success that has hitherto crowned your efforts, was marked by the same heroic spirit that has commanded the respect of your enemies, the gratitude of your country, and the admiration of mankind.

"Once more you are called upon to meet the enemy from whom you have torn so many fields; names that will never die. Once more the eyes of your countrymen are turned upon you, and again do wives and sisters, fathers and mothers, and helpless children lean for defence on your strong arms and brave hearts. Let every soldier remember that on his courage and fidelity, depends all that makes life worth having, the freedom of his country, the honor of his people, and the security of his home. Let each heart grow strong in the remembrance of our glorious past, and in the thought of the inestimable blessings for which we contend; and, invoking the assistance of that heavenly Power which has so signally blessed our former efforts, let us go forth in confidence to secure the peace and safety of our country. Soldiers, your old enemy is before you. Win from him honor worthy of your right cause, worthy of your comrades dead on so many illustrious fields.

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

much delayed by the high water in the Shenandoah River. General Longstreet was ordered to cross the mountains and occupy Culpepper Court House, moving by way of Front Royal. He succeeded in crossing a part of his corps over the Shenandoah, and as soon as a ponton-bridge could be laid, the rest of it followed, and, passing through Chester Gap, which they prevented the enemy from occupying, reached Culpepper on the 24th. Hill followed him, and Ewell, who brought up the rear, reached Front Royal on the 23d, and encamped near Madison Court House on the 29th.* During the march the enemy succeeded in passing a part of their army into the Valley, but they were held in check by the rear-guard until night-fall, and when they moved forward the next morning to bring on a battle, they found that General Lee had eluded them and placed his army beyond their reach. Baffled in his efforts, General Meade made no further attempt to interfere with the Confederates, and the army reached the Rappahannock about the 1st of August.

The failure of the Gettysburg campaign was a severe blow to the South, and made all the harder to bear by being coupled with the great disaster in the West, — the loss of Vicksburg and the Mississippi River. Any other commander would perhaps have been unable to retain the confidence of the people, who never trouble themselves to decide questions according to their real merits; but in this case no one thought of assailing General Lee. The general feeling was, that if he had failed once, it was the will of Heaven and not his fault, and that he would yet win the independence of the South. Indeed so far from losing faith in him, the people of the South seemed to double their confidence in the wisdom and skill of the soldier, and their esteem and love for the man.

Had the invasion of the North proved successful, there can

* General Lee's Report.

be little doubt that the Confederate Authorities would have proposed an honorable peace to the North, and there is as little room to doubt that the offer would have been accepted. Failing, however, in its efforts to win a speedy peace, the Southern Government began to prepare for the long and bitter struggle which every one saw must follow. On the 15th of July, President Davis issued his proclamation calling into the military service all persons residing in the Confederacy, and not legally exempt, between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years.

The 21st of August was appointed by the President a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, and was faithfully observed in the army.*

* General Lee's order requiring the observance of the day is as follows :

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
August 13, 1863.

GENERAL ORDER,
NO 53.

The President of the Confederate States has, in the name of the people, appointed the 21st day of August as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. A strict observance of the day is enjoined upon the officers and soldiers of this army. All military duties, except such as are absolutely necessary, will be suspended. The commanding officers of brigades and regiments are requested to cause Divine services, suitable to the occasion, to be performed in their respective commands.

"Soldiers! we have sinned against Almighty God. We have forgotten his signal mercies, and have cultivated a revengeful, haughty, and boastful spirit. We have not remembered that the defenders of a just cause should be pure in His eyes; that "our times are in His hands;" — and we have relied too much on our own arms for the achievement of our independence. God is our only refuge and our strength. Let us humble ourselves before Him. Let us confess our many sins and beseech Him to give us a higher courage, a purer patriotism and more determined will; that He will convert the hearts of our enemies; that He will hasten the time when war, with its sorrows and sufferings, shall cease, and that He will give us a name and place among the nations of the earth.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

IX.

THE SECOND CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA.

AUGUST, 1863 — MARCH, 1864.

I.

THE EXPEDITION TO MANASSAS.

AFTER retiring to Culpepper, General Lee, having no hope of being able to resume offensive operations during the remainder of the fall, commenced to grant furloughs to his troops. The system he adopted was a liberal one, and was carried out as far as the necessities of the army would permit.*

In September his army was reduced to a strict defensive by the withdrawal of General Longstreet's corps, which was sent to Tennessee to the assistance of the Western army, under General Bragg, then hard pressed by the army of General Rosecrans. The part borne by the veterans of the 1st corps in the Western campaign does not belong to this narration, and a recital of it must be sought elsewhere. I can only say that they were the immediate cause of the great victory at Chickamauga, and that during the unfortunate expedition to Knoxville, upon which they were sent by the folly of the President, they maintained their high reputation for courage, fortitude, and efficiency, and failed only because it was not possible for such a force to accomplish the task assigned them.

* See Note C at the end of the volume.

General Meade, also, was greatly weakened by his Government. Soon after entering Northern Virginia, a large part of his army was taken from him and sent to South Carolina, and another strong detachment was sent to New York City to put down the resistance to the enforcement of the Federal draft, which had seriously embarrassed the Government in its efforts to procure troops in that quarter. Still, when the Federal commander learned that Longstreet had been sent to Tennessee, he determined to secure the line of the Rappahannock. Accordingly, about the middle of September, he threw his cavalry across the Rappahannock, and General Lee, supposing that Meade was about to advance in force, retired to a stronger position behind the Rapidan.

The new position of General Lee was one of great strength, and as a direct attack upon it promised nothing but failure, General Meade determined to attempt a flank movement against it; but just as he was on the eve of putting his plan into execution, he received an order to send two of his *corps d'armée* to Chattanooga, where General Grant had just assumed command of the Federal army. Although this greatly reduced his strength, his army was still superior in numbers to that of General Lee.

The weakness of Meade's army was known to General Lee, and he resolved to strike a blow at his adversary, which should either seriously disable him, or keep him beyond the Rappahannock until the season for active operations was over. To accomplish this, he determined to move around Meade's right flank, and place his troops between the Federals and Washington.

On the 9th of October the army crossed the Rapidan, leaving Major-General Fitz Lee's cavalry division to guard the Southern line on the Rapidan, and the division of General Hampton, under General Stuart's own direction, moved on the right of

the army. After crossing the river, General Lee marched towards Madison Court House, taking "circuitous and concealed roads" to avoid the risk of his movement being detected by the enemy.

On the 10th of October General Stuart attacked the Federal outpost at James City, consisting of a detachment of Kilpatrick's cavalry and an infantry force belonging to the 3d corps, and drove it back upon Culpepper Court House, where the main body of Lee's army was lying. This attack revealed to General Meade the fact that his right flank had been turned by General Lee, and he at once sent his trains across the Rappahannock, and followed them with his army between the night of the 10th and the morning of the 11th. Buford's division of cavalry crossed the Rapidan, and threatened the position lately held by the Southern army. Buford was met, however, by Fitz Lee's division, repulsed, and driven towards Brandy Station.

Having turned Meade's right, General Lee followed Stuart's attack on the outposts by an advance of his whole army towards Culpepper Court House, which he reached on the morning of the 11th, only to find that General Meade had retreated across the Rappahannock, and had blown up the railroad-bridge after him. The army remained near the Court House during the rest of the day, and General Fitz Lee's division rejoined General Stuart. In the afternoon Stuart encountered the Federal cavalry near Brandy Station, and drove them across the river, after a severe engagement in which he inflicted a heavy loss upon them.

On the morning of the 12th, the army moved forward again for the purpose of "reaching the Orange and Alexandria Railroad north of the river, and interrupting the retreat of the enemy."* A force of Federal cavalry was encountered and

* General Lee's Report.

quickly repulsed at Jeffersonton, and in the afternoon the Rappahannock was reached opposite Warrenton Springs. The enemy held the north bank with cavalry and artillery, but were speedily driven away by Stuart's cavalry and a battery of artillery, and the passage of the stream effected. General Stuart at once pushed on to Warrenton, clearing the road of the enemy, and on the 13th the army was concentrated at Warrenton.

It was known to General Lee that the Federal army was on the north side of the Rappahannock, and it was believed that Meade had halted between Warrenton Junction and Catlett's Station on the railroad, and to gain more accurate information General Stuart was dispatched with two thousand cavalry upon a reconnoissance in the direction of Catlett's.

Meanwhile, General Meade, who had come to the conclusion that his retreat across the Rapidan was too hasty, was moving back towards Culpepper to meet General Lee. He had begun his movement on the afternoon of the 12th, and thus it happened, strangely enough, that while Lee was hastening to get between Meade and Washington, moving by a circuitous route, Meade was marching back to offer battle to him. Meade carried with him the 2nd, 5th, and 6th corps of his army, and Buford's cavalry, leaving the 3rd corps and Gregg's cavalry to guard the crossings of the Rappahannock at Freeman's Ford, and Warrenton Springs. The cavalry, under Gregg, as the reader will remember, were driven off on the afternoon of the 12th. This was at once reported to General Meade, and by revealing to him the true purpose of his antagonist, showed him in what danger his false move had placed his army. He at once endeavored to repair his error by an immediate recall of his forces *en route* for Culpepper Court House, and by the morning of the 13th his army was again on the north side of the Rappahannock.* The unexpected movement of General Lee had, how-

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 378, 379.

ever, thrown General French's corps out of position, and the Federal commander was forced to pause until it could be brought up. For this purpose he ordered General Warren, with the 2nd corps, to halt until French could be brought into his proper place, and to cover the retreat "of the army with his own corps, moving through Fayetteville and Auburn to Catlett's Station, after which he was to follow the line of the railroad northward."

These columns were in motion when General Stuart commenced his reconnoissance to Catlett's Station. Upon reaching that place on the 13th, he discovered General French's column retiring from the river, and at once fell back towards Warrenton, but upon entering the road leading from Warrenton to Manassas, unexpectedly found his progress barred by the corps of General Warren, and to his surprise discovered that he was hemmed in between the Federal columns and in great danger of being captured or cut to pieces.

The situation of the cavalry was critical indeed. They were concealed in a strip of woods to which General Stuart had retired as soon as he discovered his danger, but they were so near the enemy that the slightest sound — the neighing of a horse, or the clanking of a sabre might betray them. General Stuart at once called a council of his officers to decide upon their course, giving them to understand in the first place that he would entertain no proposition looking to a surrender. The result of the deliberations was, that the best thing to do was to abandon the nine pieces of horse artillery brought with the column, and try to cut their way out under the cover of the darkness. Upon further reflection General Stuart resolved to save his artillery, and determined to inform General Lee of his situation. Dismounting several of his men, he ordered them to take muskets and put on infantry knapsacks, trusting to the darkness to conceal the color of their uniforms, and make their way through the Federal lines to Warrenton, inform General Lee

that he was surrounded, and ask him to "send some of his people to help him out." Three of these messengers reached Warrenton in safety, and delivered the message, whereupon General Lee immediately set out to help Stuart out of his "scrape."

The plan which General Lee had adopted, after crossing the Rappahannock, was to move from Warrenton in two columns, his left, under Hill, along the turnpike to New Baltimore, where it was to wheel to the right, and march direct to Bristoe Station on the railroad, and the right under Ewell, along the road leading through Greenwich and Auburn, to Bristoe Station, where it was to unite with Hill. In this manner General Lee hoped to seize the railroad before Meade could arrive, and cut him off from Washington.

Meanwhile the cavalry passed the night in the greatest anxiety. The last division of the enemy bivouacked within one hundred and fifty yards of the Southern pickets, so close that the conversations of the Union troops could be almost distinguished, and during the night two officers of General Meade's staff strayed in among the cavalry and were captured. The men hardly dared to breathe, and no one was allowed to smoke or speak above a whisper, lest the faintest glimmer of a light or the merest sound should betray them.

At daybreak on the morning of the 14th, Caldwell's division, which General Warren had posted on the heights of Cedar Run to protect his rear against any sudden dash of Lee's troops, lit their camp fires to cook breakfast. From their place of concealment Stuart's men could see them, themselves sheltered from observation. While the enemy were thus engaged, they were surprised by a sharp fire of musketry from the advance of General Ewell's column, moving along the Warrenton road. Assured by this that General Lee was moving to his assistance, General Stuart promptly opened on the Federal line with his artillery,

throwing it into great confusion by the suddenness of his attack, as well as by the accuracy of his fire.* Then suddenly limbering up his guns, Stuart set off through the enemy's line, and joined General Ewell.

General Warren, supposing that he was surrounded, made his dispositions to extricate his corps. This was easily done, as but the advance of Ewell's column had come up, and Stuart had withdrawn, only too glad to get away in safety, but when Ewell did arrive with his main body, Warren was not able to hold him in check, but was forced back until Cedar Run was crossed by the Federals.† Then Ewell made no effort to pursue, as his route led him more to the left, he having been directed to move through Greenwich on his way to join General Hill.

During the 14th, Meade hurried on towards Centreville, where he had resolved to give battle, and from which point, if defeated, he could retire into the lines of Washington. Having the interior and shorter line, he was able to distance the Confederates in the march, and his main army had passed Bristoe Station when General Hill, with two of his brigades arrived there. The Federal rear-guard reached Bristoe just as Hill came up, and General Warren, who knew the ground thoroughly, posted his men along the railroad, a part of his line being protected by a deep cut in the road, and the rest by the embankment. Hill at once attacked him, but his two brigades were repulsed with heavy loss. Four hundred and fifty prisoners, five pieces of artillery, and two standards, were captured by the enemy.‡ During the night General Warren withdrew his corps, and rejoined General Meade at Centreville.

The effort to cut Meade off from Washington had failed, and it was useless to attack him in his works at Centreville, which strong position was impregnable to the force General Lee had

* Mr. Swinton states that seven men were killed by one of Stuart's shells.

† General Lee's Report.

‡ General Lee's Report.

at his command. Any effort against either of his flanks would merely result in the withdrawal of the Federal commander into the lines of Washington without conferring any benefit upon the Confederates, and there remained to General Lee nothing but to fall back to the Rappahannock as soon as possible. Resolving, however, to impede Meade's return to Culpepper as much as possible, General Lee ordered the destruction of the railroad from Cub Run to the Rappahannock. This being accomplished, the army on the 18th began to retire to the line of that river.*

The withdrawal of the army was covered by Stuart's cavalry. On the 19th, the Federal cavalry, which had been sent out in pursuit, arrived in Stuart's front. Stuart was at this time at Buckland with Hampton's division. After a sharp skirmish with the enemy he fell back slowly towards Warrenton, in order to draw them after him, and thus afford General Fitz Lee, who was moving by the Auburn road with his division, an opportunity to attack them in flank and rear. The ruse was successful. When within about four miles of Warrenton, Fitz Lee struck the Federal column, and at the same time Stuart, hearing the sound of Lee's guns, turned about and attacked the enemy in front. After a stubborn fight they broke and fled in confusion, pursued by Stuart to the vicinity of Haymarket, and by General Fitz Lee to Gainesville. Here the Federal infantry came up to the support of their cavalry, and Stuart, after inflicting some loss upon them, and taking some prisoners, fell back slowly towards Buckland. As Meade continued to advance, the cavalry retired towards the Rappahannock, skirmishing with the Federal horse in the advance all the way.

When General Lee set out on this expedition, he directed General Imboden, who was operating in the Valley with his command, to move towards the Potomac, and guard the gaps in the Blue Ridge, on Lee's left. This duty was admirably

* General Lee's Report.

performed, and while lying at Berryville, after General Lee began to withdraw from the neighborhood of Manassas, General Imboden determined to make a dash at the garrison of Charlestown and capture it.

Accordingly, he left Berryville on the 18th, and reached Charlestown in a few hours, the Federals having no suspicion of his approach until the town was surrounded. The garrison retreated to the Court House yard, which they had fortified, refusing to comply with Imboden's summons to surrender. An attack was then made by the Confederates, resulting in the surrender of the entire garrison, with the exception of the Colonel, Lieutenant-Colonel, and five others, who fled at the first fire,* and succeeded in reaching Harper's Ferry where they gave the alarm. Imboden captured four hundred and thirty-four (officers and men) prisoners, with their arms, stores, wagons, and horses. The garrison at Harper's Ferry, having heard the firing, moved rapidly toward Charlestown, which they reached in two hours after Imboden had fired the first gun. Being too weak to make a stand against the enemy, General Imboden retired up the Valley.

General Lee's loss in the expedition was about one thousand four hundred men killed, wounded, and missing, and five guns captured. The enemy's loss in killed and wounded is not known to me. Including the prisoners taken by Imboden, the army captured from the enemy two thousand four hundred and thirty-six men, forty-one of whom were commissioned officers.

After retiring to the Rappahannock, General Lee disposed his army on the south bank of the river, on both sides of the railroad, Ewell on the right and Hill on the left, with the cavalry thrown out on each flank. The main body of the army was some distance back from the river, but outposts were established at the railroad bridge and Kelley's Ford.

* General Imboden's Report.

Meade's advance was delayed until the restoration of the railroad was completed, but that work being pushed forward energetically, he arrived at the Rappahannock on the 7th of November, intending to force the passage of the stream. His army was divided into two columns, — the left, under General French, consisting of the 1st, 2d, and 3d corps, and the right, under General Sedgwick, consisting of the 5th and 6th corps. French was directed to cross the river at Kelley's Ford, and Sedgwick at Rappahannock Station, or the railroad bridge.

Kelley's Ford was guarded only by Rodes' division of Ewell's corps, and French had no trouble in pressing back this small force and securing the passage of the river. Johnson's division was immediately advanced to Rodes' assistance, and Early's division moved forward to resist the attempt of the enemy to cross at the railroad bridge.

Arriving there, General Early threw Hoke's and Hays' brigades, about two thousand strong, over to the north bank, and posted them in strong works, which had been built some time before to defend the passage of the river. The ground in front of the works was such that the enemy could not attack with a front more extended than that of the Confederates, and it was believed that a successful resistance could be made, or, that if forced to withdraw, the troops could be recrossed under the fire of the guns on the south bank.

Sedgwick's column reached the river late in the afternoon, and at once prepared to storm the Confederate works and capture the little force which had been so foolishly exposed to them. Just before dark Russell's and Upton's brigades of the 6th corps, made a charge, and the works were carried by nightfall. Out of the two thousand men of Hays' and Hoke's brigades, fifteen hundred were captured, and about one hundred killed and wounded. Those who escaped only reached the south bank by swimming the river. Four guns also fell into the hands of the enemy.

As if satisfied with this success, the Federals paused, and General Lee, not wishing to be drawn into a general battle, retired behind the Rapidan, and Meade resumed the position he had held before his retreat to Centreville.

When General Lee fell back from Bristoe Station, he hoped to be able to advance again if Meade remained at Centreville. On the 19th of October he wrote to the War Department that if Meade remained behind Bull Run, and he could procure quartermaster supplies for his army, he would move forward again. In the condition of his army at that time, any movement was difficult, for, as he declared in this letter, thousands of his men were barefooted, and without overcoats, blankets, and many other needed articles, and the weather was very cold. The advance of General Meade across the Rappahannock, however, decided General Lee to go into winter quarters on the Rapidan.

II.

MINE RUN.

After retiring behind the Rapidan, General Lee put his army into winter quarters. His position, naturally very strong, had been carefully fortified at various times, and trusting to its protection, he disposed his forces in such localities as would best afford them wood and other necessities. The right wing rested on the Rapidan at Morton's Ford, and the left was posted in strong intrenchments along the left bank of Mine Run, a small stream running at right angles to and emptying into the Rapidan. Under the cover of this line, the troops were scattered over a large extent of country, Hill's cantonments stretching almost to Charlottesville, and the artillery being as far back as

Frederick's Hall — but in such a manner as to be easily concentrated upon the approach of the enemy.

Trusting that the strength of the fortifications on the left would secure the safety of that wing, General Lee left the lower fords of the Rapidan — Ely's, Culpepper Mine, Germanna, and Jacobs' Mill — uncovered.

Upon learning this, General Meade resolved to make another effort to destroy the Confederate army before the season became too far advanced for active operations. His hope was, by crossing the Rapidan at the lower fords, to throw his army between the corps of Generals Ewell and Hill, and crush them in detail. For this purpose he supplied his troops with ten days' rations, relying on his success to open new routes for bringing up his supplies. His army was to move as follows: "The 1st corps was to cross the Rapidan at Culpepper Mine Ford, and proceed to Parker's Store on the plank road to Orange Court House. The 2d corps was to cross at Germanna Ford, and proceed out on the turnpike (which runs parallel with the plank road) to Robertson's Tavern. To this point also the 3d corps, crossing at Jacobs' Mill Ford, and followed by the 6th corps, was to march by other routes, and there to form a junction with the 2d corps. With the left thus at Parker's Store and the right at Robertson's Tavern, the army would be in close communication on parallel roads, and by advancing westward towards Orange Court House, would turn the line of Mine Run defences, which it was known did not extend as far south as to cross the turnpike and plank roads." *

The movement was to begin at dawn on the 26th of November, and as the distance from the point of starting to the point of concentration was a little less than twenty miles, General Meade hoped to have his army in position by noon of the 27th. The Federal columns moved off promptly on the morning of

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 391, 392.

the 26th, but owing to some delays in the march of the troops, and the difficulty of bridging the river, the Rapidan was not passed until the morning of the 27th. Early on the 27th the march was resumed, and General Meade issued imperative orders to push on with the utmost speed, and to try to make up as far as possible the time that had been lost.

Meanwhile General Lee was not idle. Meade had scarcely begun his movement before it was known to the Confederate commander. As early as the morning of the 25th,* it was known that something unusual was going on in the Federal lines, and the crossings of the river were closely watched. It was ascertained on the morning of the 26th, that the enemy designed crossing in force at the lower fords, and it was believed that General Meade would attempt to move towards Chancellorsville, for the purpose of gaining Lee's rear.† Ewell's

* Letter in the *Richmond Dispatch* of November 30, 1863.

† It has been said that but for the delays to which Meade was put he would have succeeded in concentrating his army on Lee's left before the latter could have learned his purpose. The following order shows that General Lee was early on the watch, and prepared to meet him.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
November 26, 1863.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 102.

"The enemy is again advancing upon our Capital, and the country once more looks to this army for its protection. Under the blessings of God your valor has repelled every previous attempt, and invoking the continuance of His favor, we cheerfully commit to Him the issue of the coming conflict.

"A cruel enemy seeks to reduce our fathers and our mothers, our wives, and our children, to abject slavery; to strip them of their property and drive them from their homes. Upon you these helpless ones rely to avert these terrible calamities, and secure to them the blessing of liberty and safety. Your past history gives them the assurance that their trust will not be in vain. Let every man remember that all he holds dear depends upon the faithful discharge of his duty, and resolve to fight and, if need be, to die, in defence of a cause so sacred and worthy the name won by this army on so many bloody fields.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

corps, which was lying around Orange Court House, was held in readiness to advance as soon as the plan of the Federals should be disclosed. Early on Friday morning, the 27th, it was ascertained that the enemy were moving towards Mine Run, and Ewell's corps was at once thrown forward to meet them, and hold them in check until Hill's corps, which was on the march, could arrive. Ewell moved rapidly, and learning of Warren's march by the Old Turnpike, formed his line near to Robertson's Tavern. About one o'clock, the 2d corps of the Federal army arrived in his front, and some sharp skirmishing ensued, but, as General Warren was ordered to refrain from attacking until the arrival of the corps of General French, nothing further occurred. General French, however, had taken the wrong road, after crossing at Jacobs' Mill Ford, and moving by a road too much to the right, came unexpectedly upon Johnson's division which formed the left of Ewell's line. Johnson at once attacked him, and a severe fight ensued, which lasted until late in the afternoon, and in which General French was very roughly handled. Discovering his blunder, French endeavored to extricate himself from his false position, and open communication with Warren at Robertson's Tavern, but before he could accomplish these objects night put an end to all hostile operations.

During the night, Hill's corps having arrived, General Lee withdrew Ewell to the west side of Mine Run, and proceeded to fortify the position he had chosen, and which extended across both the Old Turnpike and the Orange plank road. This position was very formidable. The Southern line was drawn along a commanding range of heights about seven or eight miles in length and running north and south, following the course of Mine Run, which flowed at their base. The range was in itself a strong position, being, by a singular freak of nature, formed after the most approved principles of fortifi-

cation, consisting, in short, of "four or five well-defined facings of unequal length, occupying a space of more than three thousand yards," with such angles of defence that the troops manning the line were able to enfilade every avenue of approach, while both flanks were so strongly posted as to defy almost any effort to turn them.* The country in the rear and on the flanks of this line was densely wooded, and the approaches in front were rendered difficult by the marshy ground covered with thick undergrowth that bordered Mine Run, which flowed along the entire front at a distance of twelve hundred yards from it. General Lee commenced the construction of earthworks on the heights during the night, and felled the timber in his front.

On the morning of the 28th, General Meade found that Ewell had abandoned his advanced position, but, upon pressing forward for a couple of miles, found his progress suddenly checked by the strong line held by the Confederate Army on Mine Run. He at once brought up his troops, and determined to attack the Confederates. He spent the day in reconnoitering Lee's works for the purpose of ascertaining the most favorable point for his attack. The result of these reconnoissances was the following plan of operations: General Warren, with about twenty-six thousand men, was to attempt to turn the Confederate right, while Sedgwick, with the 5th and 6th corps, would endeavor to turn the left. French, with three divisions, was to hold the line between Sedgwick and Warren, but not to engage in the attack. The 29th was spent in making the necessary dispositions, and it was ordered that Warren should commence the attack at eight o'clock, to be followed by Sedgwick at nine o'clock, on the morning of the 30th.

Meanwhile General Lee awaited the opening of the battle,

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 394.

fully confident of his ability to maintain his position. At nine o'clock on the morning of the 30th of November, General Sedgwick opened his artillery on the Confederate position, followed by the batteries of General French. General Warren, however, remained quiet. Upon forming his line for an attack, he discovered that the Confederate position was impregnable, having been greatly strengthened on the right since the 28th. He therefore declined to attack, gallantly preferring "to sacrifice himself rather than his command."* General Meade immediately repaired to Warren's line, and was satisfied that the opinion of his lieutenant was correct, and at once abandoned the attack as hopeless.

The demonstration made by General Sedgwick was so slight that General Lee was under the impression that Meade was not yet ready to attack.† The opportunity of the Federal commander had passed, however. Still, as he was between Lee and Fredericksburg, he might have drawn the Southern army from its position by threatening its communications with Richmond. But his trains were beyond the Rapidan, and the rations brought with his troops running low. Above all, the season was so far advanced that in a few days the winter would render it dangerous to move his army on Virginia soil unless he wished to share the fate of Burnside in his "mud march." Therefore, having been baffled by General Lee in his original design, there remained for him nothing but to withdraw to his old position north of the Rapidan, which he did on the night of

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 397.

† This will be seen from the following dispatch:—

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA, VIA ORANGE COURT HOUSE,
December 1, 1863.

"TO GENERAL S. COOPER:

"The enemy opened their batteries on our lines yesterday. Some skirmishing took place, but no attack.

"(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

the 1st of December. His retreat was discovered the following morning, and pursuit made, but he recrossed the Rapidan before Lee reached it.*

This was the last effort of the enemy during the year, and the army settled down into the monotony of the long winter.

III.

WINTER QUARTERS.

The folly of the Southern Government in refusing to enlist troops for the war at the beginning of the struggle, was the cause of many sore evils to the Confederacy. During the first months of hostilities, before the enthusiasm of the people had subsided, the troops would have enlisted for any period, however long; but the Government, or rather the President, was so strongly convinced that the North would be forced to make peace in a few months, that no troops were received for a longer period than twelve months. As is the case in all wars, the first year dampened the enthusiasm of the people, and the enlistments ceased. This forced upon the Government the necessity of adopting the conscription. It was a sad necessity, but the course of the Government left no alternative.

It was believed that the conscription, as at first enforced,

* Mr. Swinton says, "Lee did not follow up in the least." — *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, p. 398. The following bulletin tells a different tale :

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
December 2, 1863.

"TO GENERAL S. COOPER:

"The enemy retreated during the night. Pursuit was made this morning, but he had recrossed the Rapidan before we reached it. A few prisoners were captured.

"(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

would yield eight hundred thousand recruits for the armies, and when the conscript age was extended to forty-five years, it was said that seventy thousand more would be secured. These expectations were not realized, and by the end of the year 1863, the records of the Adjutant-General showed that but a little more than four hundred thousand men had been mustered into the service, and the Confederate Secretary of War, Mr. Seddon, stated that "not more than a half, never two thirds, of the soldiers were in the ranks." The number already in the service was greatly reduced by desertions. The officers of the army made every exertion to check the evil. Many deserters were captured, tried, and condemned to death, but the President, with a mistaken and culpable leniency, rarely allowed the sentences to be executed. The commanders of armies urged him to withhold his clemency; that executions of deserters were absolutely necessary to put a stop to desertion. In vain, however, for the President having once decided upon a course never departed from it.

One great cause of the frequency of desertion was the terrible suffering endured by the men. The troops had not clothing enough to protect them from the weather, and in many instances not food enough to enable them to withstand the cold, and very many had to decide between a horrible and lingering death and desertion. It is not to be wondered at that they chose the latter.

The mismanagement of the Confederate Commissariat was shocking. This had gone so far that when the Army of Northern Virginia went into winter quarters in 1863, the regular meat ration was only four ounces of fat pork which could only be eaten by melting it and using it on bread as a substitute for butter. The bread ration was mostly corn meal — rarely flour, and even this scanty fare was often withheld to such a degree that the men were half-starved. The horses attached to the

army also suffered greatly, about one thousand bushels of corn per day being all that was allowed the whole army, besides a scanty supply of long forage.

Matters were very bad by the close of the year. On the 2nd of January General Lee wrote to the President that he had but one day's meat rations, and feared he would not be able to keep the troops in the field.* On the 22nd of January he wrote to the Secretary of War that his army was not fed well enough to fit the troops for the exertions of the Spring campaign. He urged the discontinuance of the rule adopted by the Commissary-General allowing officers at Richmond and Petersburg and many other towns to purchase Government meat and supplies for their families at schedule prices. He said the salaries of these officers ought to be sufficient compensation for their services; that such allowances deprived the officers and soldiers *in the field* of necessary subsistence; it offended the people who paid the tithes to see them going to feed non-combatants instead of men in front of the enemy; and it demoralized the officers and soldiers in the field.

This system, in fact, allowed men who were safely housed, and at least provided with means of resisting the elements, to live as comfortably as the money at their command would permit,

* The President referred this letter to the Commissary-General, and urged him to take the necessary steps to remedy the evil. The only notice Colonel Northrop deigned to take of this important communication, was to prepare a tabular statement of his letters to General Lee, in order to show that he (the Com. Gen.) had predicted such a state of affairs. Only a few days afterwards, Colonel Northrop was informed that there were several millions of pounds of bacon in an exposed situation in North Carolina, which the people would sell, if he would send for it, but which they could not bring out themselves for fear of the vengeance of the enemy. Northrop made no attempt to procure this bacon. At the same time he had sixty-thousand pounds stored in one of his depots on the Northern Neck of Va. He neglected to bring it up to feed Lee's army, and the enemy burned it.

and kept the men in the field half starved. General Lee's letter was, under the red tape system, sent to the Commissary-General, who returned it after some delay, stating that General Lee was wrong, that the practice was necessary. Mr. Seddon, the Secretary of War issued a peremptory order restricting the city officers in the item of meat, but the Commissary-General recommended the suspension of the order until it could be seen what Congress would do. Of course the order was suspended.

On the 29th of February General Lee's Chief Commissary telegraphed Colonel Northrop that the army had bread for but one day, and that meat was getting scarce again. Colonel Northrop again took occasion to make an official declaration that he had predicted such a crisis. The matter was but imperfectly attended to, for on the 12th of March Lieutenant Colonel Cole again telegraphed, stating that the army was out of meat and had but one day's rations of bread, and again Colonel Northrop endorsed his prediction of a famine. His own incompetency had brought about the unhappy state of affairs, but he endeavored to shift the responsibility upon General Lee, because the Confederate commander did not, in addition to his duties in the field, attend to matters strictly belonging to the Commissariat. He even urged General Lee to impress the supplies needed for his army — a duty which Northrop's own agents should have attended to.

The troops had not been fed or clothed properly since their return from Pennsylvania, and their sufferings would have been too great to have been borne but for the relief contributed by their friends and relatives. In this sad hour of suffering, when the fortitude of the army was so sorely tried, General Lee made a stirring appeal to the men to stand by their colors. The appeal was made in the following order :

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
January 22, 1864.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 7.

“The Commanding General considers it due to the army to state that the temporary reduction of rations has been caused by circumstances beyond the control of those charged with its support. Its welfare and comfort are the objects of his constant and earnest solicitude; and no effort has been spared to provide for its wants. It is hoped that the exertions now being made will render the necessity of short duration: but the history of the army has shown that the country can require no sacrifice too great for its patriotic devotion.

“Soldiers! you tread, with no unequal steps, the road by which your fathers marched through suffering, privation, and blood to independence!

“Continue to emulate in the future, as you have in the past, their valor in arms, their patient endurance of hardships, their high resolve to be free, which no trial could shake, no bribe seduce, no danger appall: and be assured that the just God, who crowned their efforts with success, will, in His own good time, send down His blessing upon yours.

(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

It must not be supposed that General Lee fared better than his men. He cheerfully shared their hardships, and set them an example by the patience and fortitude with which he bore his privations. I find the following pleasant description of his fare in one of the daily newspapers of the time:

“In General Lee’s tent meat is eaten but twice a week, the General not allowing it oftener, because he believes indulgence in meat to be criminal in the present straitened condition of the country. His ordinary dinner consists of a head of cabbage, boiled in salt water, and a pone of corn bread. In this con-

nection rather a comic story is told. Having invited a number of gentlemen to dine with him, General Lee in a fit of extravagance, ordered a sumptuous repast of cabbage and middling. The dinner was served: and, behold, a great pile of cabbage and a bit of middling about four inches long and two inches across! The guests, with commendable politeness, unanimously declined middling, and it remained in the dish untouched. The next day General Lee, remembering the delicate tit-bit which had been so providentially preserved, ordered his servant to bring 'that middling.' The man hesitated, scratched his head, and finally owned up: 'De fac' is, Marse Robert, dat ar middlin' was borrowed middlin: we all didn't had nar a spec; an' I done paid it back to de man whar I got it from.' General Lee heaved a sigh of the deepest disappointment, and pitched into his cabbage."

I know it will be said, as it has been said before, that it was not in the power of the Government to procure a sufficient supply of provisions for the army. This I grant, for the Commissariat had been so mismanaged by Colonel Northrop and the President, that when the year 1864 opened there was great danger that the cause would fail for want of food for the army. I say the Commissariat was mismanaged by these officials, and I ask the reader's attention to a few facts in support of this assertion.

In the article of meat the South was never able to provide for its armies upon a scale sufficient to keep them from suffering, merely by collecting its own supplies. In January 1862, it was officially stated in a report presented to the Confederate Congress that less than twenty thousand hogs, out of the whole number packed in the Union in 1860-61, were put up in what was afterwards Confederate territory, and that about one million two hundred thousand hogs were imported into the South before the war, after being packed. Out of this number the Confederate

armies consumed during the first year of the war about three hundred thousand hogs. The only country from which pork could be directly obtained after the commencement of hostilities, was the State of Tennessee and a part of Kentucky. Hog cholera and bad crops reduced the productions of these States from two hundred thousand to less than twenty thousand head during the year 1861. This, as early as the commencement of 1862, was the principal and almost the only source open to the Government, and was at the same time heavily taxed by the demands of private purchasers. Within a few weeks after the presentation of this report, Kentucky was lost to the South, and the source of supply still more reduced.

Thus it will be seen that as early as the close of 1861, it was shown to the Government that it would be compelled to buy meat for the army outside of the limits of the South, or starve the troops. The currency of the Confederacy was worthless for such a purpose, but there was at hand the equivalent of gold, — an immense quantity of cotton, — and there were a plenty of Northern men who were willing to sell the South supplies for this cotton. It was absolutely necessary to procure food somewhere, and the Government was urged to make the purchases upon the terms held out to it.

In the fall of 1862 a responsible party, properly vouched for, proposed to deliver thirty thousand hogsheads of bacon through the Southern lines for an equivalent in cotton, the latter to be delivered at Memphis, which city was then in possession of the enemy. The President was informed that there was cotton enough in the vicinity of Memphis to buy food and clothing for the whole army, and that if it was not used for this purpose, it must be destroyed to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy; that the owners of the cotton were willing to sell it to the Government for such a purpose, but were disposed to resist its destruction. The Secretary of War approved the measure,

and the Commissary-General, who for once was fully alive to the emergency, and anxious to secure the proffered provisions, endorsed the proposition as follows: "The alternative is thus presented of violating our policy of withholding cotton from the enemy or risking the starvation of our armies." There was no law to forbid this trade, and the President was urged to allow the Commissary-General to sell only enough cotton to supply the army with bacon and salt, and shoes and blankets. He was shown that such a course had been successfully pursued in other wars, and informed by the Commissary-General that the efforts then being made would not secure *cured* bacon for the next year; that the enemy were constantly driving into the Southern lines large numbers of refugees, and thus increasing the demand for supplies; that the State of Tennessee was not able to do more than feed the Western Army; and that the supply of hogs for 1862 would fall below that of 1861 by about one hundred thousand, and that scarcely any beef remained on hand. The Secretary of War, General Randolph, a gentleman noted for the soundness and accuracy of his judgment, declared officially to the President; "Unless the deficiency be made up by purchases beyond the limits of the Confederacy, I apprehend serious consequences." In fact every effort was made to bring Mr. Davis to realize the importance of the offer held out to the Government. The manner in which he met the emergency was remarkable, to say the least. He declined the offer, in the following communication to General Randolph:

"SECRETARY OF WAR:

"Is there any necessity for immediate action? Is there satisfactory evidence that the present opportunity is the last which will be offered? Have you noticed the scheme of the enemy for the payment of their next accruing interest on their public debt? You will not fail to perceive the effect of postponing

the proposed action until January 1st, 1863, if it be necessary at any time to depart from the well-defined policy of our Government in relation to cotton.

JEFF DAVIS."

October 31, 1862."*

The reader will hardly credit the assertion, but it is nevertheless a fact that Mr. Davis had conceived the insane idea of rendering the Federal Government unable to pay the interest on its debts by withholding a few bales of cotton. He could not be made to believe the accuracy of the estimates presented to him, and to the last persisted in declaring that the South was more than able to provide meat for the armies.

Having failed in their efforts to get supplies through the enemy's lines, the friends of the army proposed to the Government to procure provisions abroad. A contract was made by the Government with parties of great wealth and credit, to run provisions, especially meat and coffee, through the Federal blockade, into Southern ports. The Government was to furnish the steamers, and to provide cotton for exportation. This cotton was to be sold, and the return cargo purchased by the private individuals who were parties to the contract, for which these parties were to charge a commission more reasonable than the Government had ever paid to any other blockade runners. Every advantage was held out to the Government by the private parties, and it was hoped that food and clothing would now be procured. The scheme unfortunately failed, through the gross mismanagement of the Government. Large quantities of provisions were purchased by the private parties to the contract, and deposited at Nassau and Bermuda, in readiness to be sent into the Confederacy. The Government was crim-

* For a more complete account of this and other similar transactions see "The Lost Cause," by Edward A. Pollard, pp. 480—489.

inally slack and irregular in its payments, and its policy with regard to sending out cotton was so close and illiberal that few persons thought it sufficient inducement to incur the danger of breaking the blockade. Again, when the Crenshaw Collie line of steamers was established in the spring of 1864, under more favorable auspices than might have been reasonably hoped for, the failure of the Government to comply with its contracts to furnish the necessary amounts of cotton, threw the whole trade into the hands of private speculators, and deprived the army of any benefit from it. Indeed, just as this business had been fairly started, the Government took the best ship owned by the company, the Atlanta, in spite of the remonstrances of the parties engaged in the trade, and with the knowledge that this vessel was needed to bring into the South, from Bermuda and Nassau, stores of a perishable nature which had been collected there, and which were absolutely needed by the army.

These blunders on the part of the Government, and the worthlessness of the currency, drove it to its mad policy of impressments in order to procure food. The exploits of the impressment officers under the rule of Mr. Seddon and Colonel Northrop, were simply a series of outrages upon the people which resulted in arraying almost the entire country against the Government. Men finally became so exasperated that they preferred to destroy or hide their provisions rather than let the Government have them. There was good reason for this, for the impressment system was a cloak for the most iniquitous frauds.

“It is astonishing what silly devices were hit upon at Richmond to meet the coming necessity, and how the empirical remedies of shallow brains aggravated the disorder. One of these so-called remedies proved one of the vilest curses that was ever fastened upon the Confederacy. On the 6th of November 1863, an order was issued by the Secretary of War, that no

supplies held by a party for his own consumption, or that of his employés or slaves, should be impressed, and that 'no officer should at any time, unless specially ordered so to do by a general commanding, in a case of exigency, impress supplies which were on their way to market for sale on arrival.' The construction given to that order filled the land with purchasers, — private individuals, railroad companies, manufacturers of all kinds, corporations of every class, relief associations of cities, towns, and counties were personally, or by their agents, in the market buying a year's supply, unlimited as to price, and protected from impressment. Speculators, whose purchases were generally *in transitu*, found themselves protected, and the Government playing into their hands. The sudden influx of purchasers into the market stimulated the cupidity of producers and holders of the necessities of life, and induced them to withhold their supplies, under the expectation of higher prices, and actually raised the prices of all prime articles fully one hundred per cent, within a single month. The purchasing officers of the Government could not buy; nor was it reasonable to expect parties to sell to the Government at schedule price when double that price was offered at their doors by others. They could not impress, for holders had, with great promptness, contracted for all their supplies to parties who paid them higher prices, and thus it naturally and surely happened that the regular supplies of the Government were cut off. The whole land was infected by speculators pampered by Mr. Seddon, the Secretary of War; and the soldier, who was without shelter, fighting our battles, found himself discriminated against in favor of the private citizen — who, with a roof above him, could better stand a short allowance of food, — and put at the mercy of the most heartless and hateful speculators, who had no conception of the war beyond that of dollars and cents."*

* The Lost Cause, pp. 487, 488.

The Government did not always keep faith with the people, even in this matter. Instead of rescinding the order of the Secretary of War, the Commissary-General instructed his agents to impress supplies *in transitu*. Mr. Seddon was afraid to interfere with these officials as he was given to understand that Colonel Northrop was sustained by the President. This, too, within fifteen days after the order was issued.

The extent to which the Commissary-General became obnoxious, may be judged by the following incident. About the last of November, Captains Montgomery and Leathers, two well-known steamboat captains of the Southwest, offered to furnish the Government with a million pounds of salt beef on the main line of railroad in Florida, at a reduced price. The cattle were exposed to raids by the enemy, and had to be transported by steamboats, and the parties making this offer owned the only steamers in certain waters of Florida. They were not willing to treat with Colonel Northrop, and desired to make their proposition directly to the Secretary of War. The proposal was, however, referred to the Commissary-General, and the captains abandoned the matter, and left the city in disgust.*

I have made this digression too long, however, and must pass on. I shall have occasion to return to the subject further on.

With the hope of filling up his ranks, General Lee offered furloughs to all who could procure recruits. To this end he issued the following order :

“ HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
JANUARY 1st, 1863.

“ GENERAL ORDER,
No. 1.

“ A furlough of thirty days will be granted to every enlisted man who will secure to any company of the Army of Northern

* Diary of a Rebel War Clerk, Vol. ii. p. 109.

Virginia, an able-bodied recruit physically qualified to perform the duties of a soldier; of good moral character, who is not a deserter, or absent without leave from any other command, who could be received under ordinary circumstances under the regulations of the War Department governing enlistments, who shall enlist unconditionally for the war, and actually be present, ready to report for duty with his command.

By command of GEN. R. E. LEE,
(Signed) W. H. TAYLOR, A. A. G.

In view of the resumption of hostilities in the spring, General Lee, about the 25th of January, recommended the formation of several additional brigades of cavalry for service in his army. He urged the Government to take for this purpose the cavalry in South Carolina, and not to heed the objections of the State Authorities and Generals along the Carolina coast who would oppose their withdrawal. He stated that the enemy were collecting a very strong force on the Rapidan, and that it was absolutely necessary for him to have more cavalry. The events of the spring campaign proved the wisdom of his views.

The 8th of April, 1864, having been set apart by the President as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, General Lee directed the proper observance of the day.*

*HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
March, 30, 1864.

"GENERAL ORDER,
No. 23.

"In compliance with the recommendation of the Senate and House of Representatives, His Excellency the President, has issued his proclamation calling upon the people to set apart Friday, the 8th of April, as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

"The commanding General invites the army to join in the observance of the day. He directs due preparations to be made in all departments, to anticipate the wants of the several commands, so that it may be strictly observed. All military duties, except such as are absolutely necessary, will be suspended. The chaplains are desired to hold services in their regiments and brigades. The officers and men are requested to attend.

When General Lee embarked in the cause of his native State, he was the possessor of considerable wealth. His estate fell into the hands of the enemy at the outset, and by the close of 1862, his other property was within the Federal lines, and of no service to him. He was dependent upon his pay as a General of the Confederate army. This soon became inadequate to the task of providing for his family, and they, in common with the people of the South, were subjected to hardships and privations.

This became known to the citizens of Richmond, and the city government at once appropriated a large sum for the purchase of a residence for the General and his family, which was to be presented to them in the name of the people of Richmond. General Lee learned this plan from the daily newspapers, and at once addressed the following note to the President of the City Council of Richmond :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
November 12, 1863.

“TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL, *Richmond, Va.* :

“SIR : My attention has been directed to a resolution reported in the newspapers as having been introduced into the body over which you preside, having for its object the purchase by the city of Richmond of a house for the use of my family.

“I assure you, sir, that no want of appreciation of the honor conferred upon me by this resolution, or insensibility to the kind feelings which prompted it, induces me to ask, as I most respectfully do, that no further proceedings be taken with reference to the subject. The house is not necessary to the use of my family, and my own duties will prevent my residence in Richmond.

“Soldiers! let us humble ourselves before the Lord, our God, asking, through Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, beseeching the aid of the God of our forefathers in the defence of our homes and our liberties, thanking Him for His past blessings, and imploring their continuance upon our cause and our people.

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

I should, therefore, be compelled to decline the generous offer, and trust that whatever means the City Council may have to spare for this purpose may be devoted to the relief of the families of our soldiers in the field, who are more in want of assistance and more deserving of it than myself.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully,

Your ob't serv't,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

Nothing but a pure unselfishness and a high sense of duty dictated this letter. When General Lee linked his fate with that of Virginia, he knew he would be called upon to suffer many hardships, and he was ready to bear his part in the great sorrow which had fallen to the lot of the nation. The city authorities, however, were not willing to let him run any risk as long as they could prevent it, and they secured the amount appropriated for a house, to his family in such a manner as to prevent them from being placed in danger of want.

During the winter General Pickett's division was detached from the army, and sent to North Carolina.

The Federal force on the Peninsula was at this time commanded by Major-General B. F. Butler. Towards the last of January, General Butler conceived the idea of capturing Richmond by a sudden dash of his forces, being under the impression that the city had been stripped of its garrison. He was to send a raiding party up the Peninsula to surprise Richmond, and to cover this movement, the Army of the Potomac was to make a demonstration against Lee's army on the Rapidan. His raiding party, under General Wistar, reached Bottom's Bridge on the Chickahominy on the 6th of February, but finding the road to Richmond strongly guarded, retired down the Peninsula. On the 7th, General Sedgwick, commanding the Federal army during General Meade's absence, made a demonstration against

the lower fords of the Rapidan, but accomplished nothing, and lost two hundred and fifty men.

Towards the close of the winter a more serious attempt was made by the enemy to take Richmond. An expedition consisting of four thousand cavalry was fitted out with great care, for the purpose of capturing the city, and releasing the Union prisoners confined there. The command of this expedition was entrusted to General Kilpatrick. He was seconded by Colonel Ulric Dahlgreen, a young officer of great skill and daring. The plan of this expedition was as follows. A column under General Custar was to make a dash upon Charlottesville, to draw attention from the main body, which was to proceed to Beaver Dam, on the Central Railroad. Arriving there, the column was to be divided. A part, under General Kilpatrick, was to move upon Richmond along the north bank of James River, while the remainder, under Colonel Dahlgreen, were to cross to the south side, move down the right bank of the James, release the prisoners at Belle Isle, opposite Richmond, recross the river, burning the bridges after them, and rejoin Kilpatrick in the city. Richmond was to be given to the flames and President Davis and his cabinet killed.*

The expedition set out on the morning of the 28th of February. Custar attempted his part, but upon reaching the vicinity of Charlottesville was driven off by Stuart's horse artillery, when he at once fell back to his infantry supports at Madison Court House.

At Beaver Dam the main column was divided, Kilpatrick keeping on towards Richmond, and Dahlgren moving towards the river. Kilpatrick approached the city by the Brook Turnpike, and then, with scarcely a show of fighting, turned off, and kept on down the Peninsula.

Dahlgreen succeeded in reaching the James, but finding the

* See Note D, at the close of the volume.

river too high to be forded, moved towards Richmond by the Westham plank-road, which runs parallel with the river, at a distance of about a mile from it, hoping to be able to join Kilpatrick before the city. On the night of the 1st of March, only a few hours after Kilpatrick's weak and strange retreat, Colonel Dahlgreen arrived within four miles of Richmond. Here he encountered a batallion composed of department clerks, and another of laborers in the Government workshops, posted on Green's Farm.

It was an intensely dark night, but as Colonel Dahlgreen was at the head of five hundred picked troopers, he felt confident of dispersing the small force opposed to him, and ordered his men to charge the "militia." The militia, however, received the charge with a well directed volley, which emptied eleven saddles, and scattered the cavalry in confusion. Without attempting to renew the attack Dahlgreen set off around the city, to gain the road leading down the Peninsula. During his retreat he became separated, with about one hundred horsemen, from the rest of his command, and about eleven o'clock on the night of the 3rd of March, rode up to the bivouac of a party of the 24th Virginia cavalry, who were on the watch for him. As soon as he discovered the Confederates, he ordered them to surrender. His demand was met by the discharge of about a dozen guns. A few shots were returned by the Federal cavalry, who immediately took to flight, leaving Colonel Dahlgreen behind, a corpse. The next day the men who were with him at the time of his death, surrendered to the Confederates.

Thus ended the famous raid which came so near resulting in the capture and destruction of the Southern Capital. The city was utterly defenceless on the morning of March 1st, when the approach of the raiders was announced, and had the Federal cavalry appeared before Richmond at daylight that morning, as was their design, nothing could have saved the city, there being no force at hand to prevent the entrance of the enemy.

X.

THE OVERLAND CAMPAIGN.

MAY—JUNE, 1864.

I.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN.

It was understood by all parties that the campaign of 1864 would be more momentous than any that had preceded it, if, indeed, it did not decide the struggle. What little preparation could be made on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia was carried out promptly and with vigor. The army was very weak, and no reënforcements could be had. The corps of General Longstreet, which had been operating in Tennessee during the fall and winter, returned to the army about the 1st of May, but brought with it only two of its divisions—Pickett's, together with a considerable force, having been sent to North Carolina on an expedition which never profited the South. Recruits had ceased to come in voluntarily, and the conscription was taking out of the service more men than it brought in. There was nothing for General Lee to hope for in the matter of increasing his army, and the fact that he would soon be called on to face the large force under General Grant filled him with grave anxiety.

The Army of Northern Virginia now numbered less than fifty

thousand men. The effective strength of Ewell's corps was about fifteen thousand, that of Hill's about fourteen thousand, and Longstreet's (one of whose divisions — Pickett's — was absent, and whose corps had lost heavily in Tennessee,) had barely ten thousand men. The cavalry had dwindled down to a mere brigade and was scarcely three thousand strong, while the artillery was no stronger in proportion than the infantry. The army had been fed during the winter on the starvation policy of President Davis and Colonel Northrop, and was not in good "fighting trim" as far as its physical condition was concerned. The troops were improperly clothed, and many of the men lacked shoes. Still there was but one sentiment in the whole army — a stern determination to do all that could be done to secure the success of the cause.

The position held by the Confederates was naturally so strong, and had been fortified with so much care, that General Lee had no apprehension of an attack in front, and was inclined to believe that the next effort of the enemy would be made against his right, which offered more advantages for an offensive movement than his left. The line which he had to defend was a long one, and, though General Lee expected an attempt against his right, it was uncertain which flank the Federal commander would select. Therefore it was necessary to watch the whole line, and be prepared for an attack either from the left, in the direction of Gordonsville, or from the lower fords on the right. The line of the Rapidan was held by small detachments, principally for purposes of observation, and the main army was posted in *echelon* from the neighborhood of Somerville Ford on the Rapidan to Gordonsville. Longstreet's corps was at the latter place, Hill was at Orange Court House, and Ewell on the Rapidan. The disposition of the army was such that it could be rapidly concentrated upon any threatened point.

The Federal Authorities had been active during the winter

and early spring. The experience of the war had taught them wisdom, and they determined in the campaign just about to open, to place the entire direction of their military operations in the hands of a single individual, who should receive the chief command of all their armies.

The person selected to fill this high post was Major-General Ulysses S. Grant. General Grant had entered the service of the United States at the commencement of the war, and had risen steadily from the rank of Colonel to the high position now conferred upon him. Whatever opinion men might entertain as to his genius, there could be no doubt that he was the most *successful* commander the war had produced, and it was natural that when so many had failed, his successes should make him also the most popular General in the Union service. His ideas of war were not those of a great commander, and were based less upon the employment of military skill than of brute force. His system of warfare may be briefly summed up in his own words — to employ superior forces, and “to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and his resources, until by *mere attrition*, if no other way, there should be nothing left to him but an equal submission with the loyal section of our common country to the Constitution and Laws of the land.” But though not a great soldier, in the military sense of the word, General Grant was possessed of an energy and perseverance that were as remarkable as they were great. Nothing was sufficient to turn him from his purpose, and when he once embarked in an enterprise, he did so with a resolution not to abandon it as long as there remained to him the least hope of success.

He entered upon the command of the Federal armies on the 17th of March, 1864, and, as it was evident that the principal struggle of the war would be made in Virginia, established his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, the immediate

command of which was retained by General Meade. General Grant at once proceeded to prepare Meade's army for the campaign. He had everything to encourage him. The Federal armies were never in a better condition, and his Government responded readily to every one of his suggestions. New levies were made in the Northern States, and the War Department exerted itself to increase the armies in the field to the enormous strength of one million of men. Heavy bounties were offered, and these, with the draft, succeeded so well in procuring recruits, that when the war closed, the army of the United States numbered more than a million of men. Arms, clothing, and supplies of all kinds were provided and distributed without regard to cost, and nothing was left undone that could in the least contribute to the accomplishment of the end in view. General Grant also enjoyed the great advantage which had been denied to the commanders of the Army of the Potomac, of being unfettered by instructions from Washington.

The army of General Meade was reorganized and divided into three corps, the 2d, 5th, and 6th, commanded respectively by Generals Hancock, Warren, and Sedgwick, officers of tried ability. The cavalry was placed under Major-General Sheridan, and by his vigorous measures brought to the highest state of efficiency. By the end of April the 9th corps, which had been organizing at Annapolis as a separate command, under General Burnside, was added to the Army of the Potomac, and swelled the total effective strength of that army to about one hundred and forty thousand men of all arms.

With this force General Grant resolved to move upon the army of General Lee at the earliest possible moment. His plan of operations was as follows: The Army of the Potomac, under General Grant's immediate direction, was to cross the Rappahannock, assail Lee's right, seize his communications, force him from his position, and compel him to fight a general engage-

ment between his present line and Richmond. If successful, General Grant was to pursue his antagonist to Richmond, and capture the city and Confederate army. At the same time, a strong column, under Major-General Butler, was to ascend the James River, from Fortress Monroe, capture City Point, and move up the south bank of the river to seize the communications of the Confederates south of the James, and, if possible, capture Petersburg. Another use which General Grant hoped to make of Butler's army was, in case he should not defeat Lee before reaching Richmond, to have it in position to cover his passage of the James River, it being his intention, if he failed on the north side, to throw his whole army to the south side, and strike at the Confederate Capital in its most vulnerable point. While these movements were in progress in Eastern Virginia, the command of General Sigel was to be organized into two expeditions, one in the Kanawha Valley, under General Crook, and the other in the Shenandoah Valley, under General Sigel in person. The former was to make a descent upon the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, and cut off Lee's supplies from Southwestern Virginia, and the latter to cut the Central Railroad, the other great line of supplies. These columns would, it was believed, be sufficient for the "crushing out of the rebellion" in Virginia.

The bad weather and wet spring delayed the Federal army until the beginning of May.

II.

THE WILDERNESS.

At midnight on the 3d of May, the Federal army commenced to advance. It moved in two columns; the right consisting of

Warren's and Sedgwick's corps, crossed the Rapidan at Germanna Ford, and the left, consisting of Hancock's corps, crossed at Ely's Ford, six miles below. General Burnside's corps was left to guard the position held by the army during the winter, with orders to follow across the river in twenty-four hours. The passage of the river was effected during the 4th of May, and the army bivouacked that night between the Rapidan and Chancellorsville, Hancock's corps encamping on the old battleground of the previous spring. The next day the march was resumed, it being General Grant's design, now that he had succeeded in turning Lee's right flank, to march rapidly through the Wilderness to Gordonsville, and plant himself between the Confederate army and Richmond. The order of march for the 5th of May was stated as follows, by General Meade, in his instructions to his corps commanders : —

“ 1st Major-General Sheridan, commanding cavalry corps, will move with Gregg's and Torbert's divisions against the enemy's cavalry in the direction of Hamilton's Crossing. General Wilson, with the third cavalry division, will move at five A. M. to Craig's Meeting-house on the Catharpin road. He will keep out parties on the Orange Court House Pike and plank road, the Catharpin road, Pamunkey road (road to Orange Springs), and in the direction of Troyman's store and Andrews' store or Good Hope Church. 2nd. Major-General Hancock, commanding 2nd corps, will move at five A. M. to Shady Grove Church and extend his right towards the 5th corps at Parker's store. 3rd. Major-General Warren, commanding 5th corps, will move at five A. M. to Parker's store on the Orange Court House plank-road, and extend his right towards the 6th corps at Old Wilderness Tavern. 4th. Major-General Sedgwick, commanding 6th corps, will move to Old Wilderness Tavern on the Orange Court House Pike as soon as the road is clear.”

By a glance at the map the reader will see that if General Grant had been permitted to make this march, it would have placed his army in the open country beyond the Wilderness. He was confident, from the fact of having been permitted to cross the Rapidan without molestation, that General Lee was endeavoring to secure his retreat in order to preserve his communications with the Capital, and he expected to be able so to mask the march of his army through the dangerous Wilderness as to reach the open country beyond in safety, and before Lee should be ready to meet him. Therefore he neither expected nor desired an encounter in the Wilderness.

Meanwhile the Confederate army was in rapid motion. General Lee had been watching his adversary closely, and no sooner had General Grant commenced his movement than the Confederate commander detected and comprehended it. The plan which he adopted to meet the advance was both daring and skilful. He determined to permit General Grant to cross the Rapidan without molestation, and thus lure him into the Wilderness, when he would fall upon him unexpectedly and destroy the Federal army in the depths of the jungle, where it would be impossible for the Federals to use their artillery, and where they would be forced to fight at great disadvantage. The Confederate commanders were well acquainted with the country in which General Lee meant to bring on the battle, while to the enemy it was a bewildering thicket. General Lee determined to move his army by the plank road and turnpike leading from Orange Court House to Fredericksburg, and running parallel to each other. These roads ran eastward from Hill's position at the Court House, and intersected the roads by which the Federal army was moving, at right angles, and the distance by each from Hill's position to the Federal line of march was only about twenty miles.

Accordingly, on the 4th of May, Lee advanced Ewell's and

Hill's corps, — the former by the Old Turnpike, the latter by the plank road, — and ordered Longstreet to march at once from Gordonsville, and move down on the right of Ewell, so as to strike the Federal advanced forces while on their march. Thus, while Grant was congratulating himself upon his safe passage of the Rapidan, which he “regarded as a great success,”* and expecting to find Lee retreating before him, Lee was quietly changing his front, and disposing his army so as to strike Grant when he least expected it, and dispute his march to Gordonsville.

Thus it happened that on the night of May 4th, the advance of the Federal army — Warren's corps — halted at Old Wilderness Tavern, at the point of intersection of the road from Germanna Ford with the Orange and Fredericksburg Turnpike, while Ewell's corps bivouacked on the latter road, only three miles from Warren's camp, neither force being aware of the presence of the other.

Early on the morning of the 5th of May, both columns resumed the advance, the Federal army moving as indicated in General Meade's order, unaware of the arrangements made to dispute its progress. Warren was followed by Sedgwick's corps, which was then lying near the river, and to guard against any movement of the Confederates from the Orange Turnpike, he threw out Griffin's division on that road, and moved Crawford's division by a wood road to gain Parker's Store.†

When Ewell went into camp on the night of the 4th, his force was disposed as follows: Johnson's division was in the advance, within three miles of Old Wilderness Tavern, Rodes lay in his rear, and Early followed, halting at Locust Grove. At six o'clock the next morning the presence of the enemy was

* General Grant's Report, p. 6.

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 419.

reported to General Johnson, who immediately threw forward his division to secure a position on some high ground where he proceeded to form his line.

General Grant, who had now arrived on the field in person, made his dispositions to drive off the force resisting his march, which he supposed to be merely a handful. He was still under the impression that, as he had turned Lee's right flank, that officer would prefer flight to an encounter on the Rapidan, and he regarded the corps of General Ewell as merely a rear-guard covering the Confederate retreat, for he never dreamed of being attacked in that region.*

The country in which General Lee had thus thrown down the gage of battle was one in which it was difficult to manœuvre, and Lee, having selected his position to bar the march of his adversary, secured an important advantage, inasmuch as he was able to choose his own ground. The woods were very thick, — so dense, indeed, that not even a regimental commander could see the whole of his line at the same moment, and after leaving the roads, the only guides which could be followed in many instances were the points of the compass.

Still, thinking that the force in his front was only the Confederate rear-guard, General Grant decided to make his attack with only three divisions of Warren's corps, and about noon advanced this force, and made an impetuous assault on Johnson's division. The Federals were received with a hot fire of musketry, but without flinching they pressed on, and after a severe struggle broke the line where it crossed the turnpike, and was held by the brigade of General J. M. Jones. Following up their success, they swept the Confederates back in confusion, and poured through the gap they had made, with loud cheers. General Jones tried in vain to rally his men. They

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 421, 422.

were incapable of re-forming, and the gallant General was killed while engaged in his heroic but hopeless undertaking.

There was danger that the whole division would be routed. General Stewart immediately moved his brigade from its position in the line of battle, and hurled it upon the head of the Federal column which was pressing on through the gap in the line. This prompt movement saved the day, and the enemy were driven back rapidly from the ground they had gained, leaving two pieces of artillery in the hands of Stewart's men.

At the same time, General Ewell advanced Rodes' division to Johnson's assistance, and directed General Gordon to take his own and Daniels' brigades (both of Rodes' division), and drive the enemy back on the right. Gordon obeyed the order to the letter, driving the Federals back for a mile and a half, and capturing, during the movement, an entire regiment with its officers and colors.

On the left the attack was made a little later, and was met by the brigades of Pegram and Hays, and repulsed, and the Confederates, then pressing forward, drove the enemy back for a mile.

The troops were recalled to their original line. Not wishing to attack the Federal army with only his own corps, General Ewell held his position to await the arrival of Hill and Longstreet.

The repulse of Warren's corps convinced General Grant that the Confederate commander had really determined to offer him battle in the Wilderness instead of retreating, and he immediately brought up the 6th corps, under General Sedgwick, and sent orders to General Hancock to hurry forward with the 2d corps. The road by which Hancock was marching, is known as the Brock road, and intersects the Orange Plank Road about two miles and a half southwest of Old Wilderness Tavern, and four miles east of Parker's Store on the latter road. The corps of A. P. Hill was moving down the plank road, having left

Verdierville early that morning. Hill's line of march would bring him directly to the crossing of the Brock road, and if he should succeed in occupying that position before the arrival of Hancock, he would cut off the 2d Federal corps from its main body. As soon as he saw the exposed condition of these cross roads, General Meade sent Getty's division, of Sedgwick's corps, to occupy the important point until Hancock could come up. Hill arrived in front of the cross roads shortly after the repulse of Warren's attack, and, finding Getty's division on the ground, and not knowing what force it was, formed his line, across the plank road, and commenced to feel the strength of the enemy.

General Lee arrived with Hill's corps, or rather in company with General Hill, a little in advance of the troops. While the attack upon Ewell was in progress Generals Lee and Hill, together with several other officers, halted for a few moments in an open field. Immediately in front was a heavy thicket, and at this instant it was occupied by a Federal scouting party. The scouts were within less than two hundred yards of the Confederate commander, and might easily have shot him, but unaware that it was General Lee, and startled at finding themselves so unexpectedly in the Southern lines, they beat a hasty retreat.

As soon as Hill's line was formed, General Lee directed General Wilcox to open communications with General Ewell, which was soon accomplished.

The Confederate army now occupied a line six miles in length extending from the thick woods on the right of the Orange Plank Road to beyond the Old Turnpike on the left, and covering both of these roads, running almost the whole way through heavy woods. Immediately in front was the thicket occupied by the Federal army, which was by its position prevented from using its artillery except on the cleared spaces of the roads.

Hancock, having succeeded in occupying the Brock road, extended his line along it towards the south, and about four o'clock was ordered by General Grant to attack Hill's corps, which was in line of battle only about three hundred yards distant, and drive it back to Parker's Store. Hancock at once made his attack with impetuosity, and endeavored, in "repeated and desperate assaults" to force back the Southern line. Hill's men received every advance with such well directed volleys of musketry that Hancock was driven back every time with heavy loss. The effort to force Hill's line from its position failed, and the fighting ceased at nightfall.

The advantage was decidedly with the Confederates. They had checked the advance of the Federals, had prevented them from laying hold of the communications of the Southern army with Richmond, had forced them into a battle which they did not expect or desire, and had repulsed every assault, inflicting severe loss upon them, and capturing two thousand prisoners and four pieces of artillery.

The Southern loss was heavy, but much less than that of the enemy.* As Longstreet's corps had not yet come up, General

* That night General Lee sent the following bulletin to Richmond:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May 5, 1864.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"The enemy crossed the Rapidan at Ely's and Germanna Fords. Two corps of this army moved to oppose him — Ewell by the old turnpike, and Hill by the plank road. They arrived this morning in close proximity to the enemy's line of march. A strong attack was made upon Ewell, who repulsed it, capturing many prisoners and four pieces of artillery. The enemy subsequently concentrated upon General Hill who, with Heth's and Wilcox's divisions, successfully resisted repeated and desperate assaults. A large force of cavalry and artillery on our right was driven back by Rosser's brigade. By the blessing of God we maintained our position against every effort until night, when the contest closed. We have to mourn the loss of many brave officers and men. The gallant Brigadier-General J. M. Jones, was killed, and Brigadier-General Stafford, I fear, mortally wounded, while leading his command with conspicuous valor.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE."

Lee decided not to press his advantage, but to await the arrival of all his forces.

General Longstreet, as soon as he received General Lee's orders, set out from Gordonsville on the morning of the 4th. Marching with characteristic energy, he reached a point about ten miles from the battle-field late in the afternoon of the 5th, but, owing to the density of the woods, did not hear the firing in front, and was unaware that an engagement was in progress, until he received an order from General Lee to move to Hill's assistance. It was late at night when the order reached him, and he at once prepared to execute it. It was designed that he should relieve Hill's corps which had been hotly engaged during the 5th.

At two o'clock on the morning of the 6th, General Longstreet put his column in motion, and reached Hill's position a little after daylight. Hill's men had been informed that Longstreet would relieve them, and they commenced to retire as his column came up.

Just at this moment, however, the Federals renewed the attack, directing their efforts by a strange chance, against Hill's line. During the night, the 9th corps, under General Burnside arrived, and took position between Hancock and Sedgwick.

General Lee had determined to assume the offensive, and to attack Grant at five o'clock on the morning of the 6th. His design was to turn the Federal left and force Grant to retire to the Rapidan, and just before Grant opened fire upon Hill's position, General Ewell made a sharp attack on Sedgwick's corps, thus anticipating the Federal commander.

Hill's men were taken by surprise, and, being engaged in their withdrawal, were for a time at the mercy of the enemy. Heth's and Wilcox's divisions were thrown into confusion, and beaten back upon Longstreet's column which had not yet formed its line. They were driven back for a mile or more, to within

a hundred yards of the spot where General Lee had established his head-quarters, and for a moment it seemed that the right wing would be driven from its position.

But Longstreet was equal to the emergency. Throwing forward Kershaw's division, (formerly McLaws'), he held the enemy in check until he could bring up his whole corps, when he drove the Federals before him, and reestablished the line. This was not accomplished without severe fighting, for the corps of General Hancock which was in Longstreet's immediate front, had been so strengthened that Hancock had with him almost one half of the entire Federal army.

This had consumed almost the whole morning, and it was now after 10 o'clock. At 11 o'clock, General Longstreet was ordered by General Lee to select a part of his force, and attack the enemy's left flank. This order was promptly executed, and Longstreet, falling suddenly upon Hancock's left, drove it back towards the Brock road, which the former now determined to seize, as its possession would compel the retreat of General Grant to the Rapidan, and place him at the mercy of the Confederates during his flight. Elated by his success, General Longstreet spurred forward to lead this movement in person, but on the way paused to receive the congratulations of General Jenkins, a young officer who, by his rapid rise and extraordinary skill, had become a favorite with the whole army. At this moment a heavy discharge of musketry was fired upon them by their own troops, who had mistaken them and their escorts for Federal cavalry. General Longstreet vainly shouted to his men to cease firing, but before he could make them understand their mistake, he was shot in the throat, the ball passing out through his right shoulder. He fell from his horse by the side of his friend, General Jenkins, who had been killed at the first fire, and at first his staff thought he, too, was dead. Discovering that he was only wounded, they procured a litter, and he was

borne to the rear, the troops testifying their sympathy by loud cheers, as the litter was carried along the line.

Now that Longstreet, his most trusted lieutenant, was disabled, General Lee assumed the immediate direction of affairs on the right. The delay occasioned by the fall of General Longstreet, gave the enemy time to discover the menace against their right, and to prepare for it.

It was four o'clock before General Lee could get his troops sufficiently in hand to resume the attack. The enemy resisted so stubbornly that in about an hour the Southern line was so much shaken that it was on the point of giving way. In this trying hour, when the fate of the battle seemed suspended by a hair, General Lee determined to lead the troops in person in a decisive charge. Placing himself at the head of the Texas brigade, he ordered it forward. Those who saw him at that moment, describe his appearance as inexpressibly grand. He had removed his hat, and, bareheaded, and with his hair floating in the wind, and his features glowing with the fire of a true soldier, he pointed in silence toward the Federal line, with a gesture far more eloquent than words could have been. For a moment the troops paused, and gazed first at their commander and then at each other, as if hesitating whether to allow him to incur such danger. Then a ragged, scarred veteran, approaching the Commander-in-Chief, seized his bridle rein and turned his horse's head, saying respectfully, but firmly, "You must not expose yourself, General Lee. You must go to the rear. We will obey your orders. We have never faltered yet, and we will not do so now. Will we boys?" he added, turning to his comrades. Instantly the whole line took up the cry, "No! no! General Lee to the rear!" and the men refused to move until General Lee had withdrawn to a safer position.* Touched

* General Lee was so fully impressed with the importance of the situation, especially after the fall of Longstreet, that he paid but little heed to his per-

to the heart by this affecting proof of the devotion of his troops, General Lee bowed and rode back, while the line with deafening cheers, moved forward to the charge.

The attack was made with a will, and the troops kept their promise. The enemy were driven into the log breastworks which they had erected on the Brock road, and the Confederates pressed on to within a hundred yards of the works, pouring in heavy volleys of musketry. At this moment the log breastwork of the enemy was set on fire by the burning forest, which had been fired during the afternoon, and the flames, sweeping down the road, forced a part of the enemy back from their line. Seeing this, the Confederates sprang forward, and planted their battle-flags on the captured works. A considerable body of Hancock's troops at once retreated towards Chancellorsville, but the rest, rallying, regained possession of the works, driving the Confederates from them.* It was now dark, and the battle came to an end.

On the left General Ewell had done good service. During the morning the 6th corps, under General Sedgwick, supported by Burnside's corps, made repeated efforts to carry his position, each of which was repulsed with loss. Towards twilight, General Gordon, with several brigades, made a fierce attack upon Sedgwick's line, driving it back, and sweeping everything before him for a distance of two miles. At dark he had forced back Sedgwick's corps from its original position, and thrown it into considerable confusion, capturing Generals Seymour and Shaler, together with the greater part of their brigades. But his command having become separated by the darkness and

sonal safety. During the battle a shell exploded under his own horse, killing the horse of his Adjutant-General, Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, and soon afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall was severely wounded by his side.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 437.

the dense woods, General Gordon returned to his original position.*

The losses on both sides were heavy. The Confederate returns showed a loss of one thousand killed and six thousand wounded — a total of seven thousand. The Federal army had about twenty thousand men killed, wounded and captured.

On the morning of the 7th, General Lee refrained from making any offensive movement, and awaited the renewal of the

* This exploit was reported by General Lee to the War Department as follows:—

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May 7, 1864. 8 P. M.

“HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR:

“General Gordon turned the enemy’s extreme right yesterday evening, and drove him from his rifle pits. Among the prisoners captured are Generals Seymour and Shaler. A number of arms were also taken. The enemy has abandoned the Germanna Ford road, and removed his ponton-bridge towards Ely’s. There has been no attack to-day, only slight skirmishing along the line.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE.”

The remainder of the events of the day were summed up in a bulletin sent off at the close of the battle.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May, 6, 1864.

“TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

“Early this morning, as the divisions of General Hill, engaged yesterday, were being relieved, the enemy advanced, and created some confusion. The ground lost was recovered as soon as the fresh troops got into position, and the enemy driven back to his original line. Afterwards we turned the left of his fresh line, and drove it from the field, leaving a large number of dead and wounded in our hands, among them General Wadsworth. A subsequent attack forced the enemy into his intrenched lines on the Brock road, extending from Wilderness Tavern on the right, to Trigg’s Mill. Every advance on his part, thanks to a merciful God, has been repulsed. Our loss in killed is not large, but we have many wounded, most of them slightly, artillery being little used on either side. I grieve to announce that Lieutenant-General Longstreet was severely wounded, and General Jenkins killed. General Pegram was badly wounded yesterday. General Stafford, it is hoped, will recover.

R. E. LEE.”

attack by General Grant. The engagement of the previous day had shown him that the Federal position was much stronger than he had supposed, and the size of his army admonished him to be chary of the lives of his troops.

General Grant, however, was equally indisposed to resume the offensive. His army had suffered severely, and he had become convinced that it was useless to try to drive Lee from his position. Still it was necessary to make some change in the situation of affairs. General Lee had effectually prevented him from occupying Gordonsville and laying hold of the Confederate communications with Richmond, and there remained but two courses open to him, to retire across the Rapidan, or to move his army southward to Spottsylvania Court House, and get between Lee and Richmond. He chose the latter.

While this movement was in progress, General Sheridan was directed to make a dash towards Richmond with his cavalry, for the purpose of cutting Lee's communications. Sheridan passed around the Confederate right flank to the North Anna River, cut the Central Railroad at Beaver Dam Station, and then passed over to Ashland and cut the Fredericksburg road. He was followed hard by the cavalry of General Stuart, whose horses were scarcely equal to the task of intercepting him. Stuart came up with the Federal horsemen just as they were preparing to burn Ashland on the 10th of May, and drove them from the town. Sheridan then moved in the direction of Richmond, and Stuart taking a shorter route, threw his command between the Federal column and the city. Sheridan was encountered again at the Yellow Tavern, on the Brook turnpike, seven miles from Richmond, and in the engagement which ensued General Stuart was mortally wounded. He was taken into the city, and every effort made to save his life; but he died the next day. He was the only great cavalry leader the war produced, and his loss was severely felt by the South; but

more especially by the army with which he had been so long connected.

After General Stuart's fall, the conduct of the Confederates was marked by a strange and unfortunate hesitation. The Federal cavalry retired to a piece of woods on the right of the turnpike, and, deceiving the Confederates by a show of resistance in front, quietly repaired the Meadow Bridge across the Chickahominy, over which they retired unmolested, and retreated down the Peninsula.

Had General Sheridan, instead of halting at Ashland, decided to hurry forward, and attack Richmond, he would have found the city defenceless,* and could have taken it with but slight loss.

III.

SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE.

Having decided to move around Lee's right, and occupy Spottsylvania Court House, General Grant determined to lose no time in doing so. The position held by his army enabled him to execute his intention with celerity. Hancock's corps held possession of the Brock road, which ran directly from the Federal line to the Court House, which was distant only fifteen miles. During the afternoon he sent his trains off in that direction, so that his march might not be incommoded by them, and

* On the night before the battle at the Yellow Tavern, the writer was at the Confederate War Department seeking for "news," and while there was told by an officer holding a high position in the Department that a large force of Federal cavalry was approaching the city, which was defenceless, and that the Government was very seriously alarmed for its safety. Stuart, he said, was coming on as rapidly as possible, but the enemy were between him and the city.

ordered the army to prepare to follow at night-fall. The 5th corps was to move off at dark, and by a rapid march occupy Spottsylvania Court House; the rest of the troops would follow immediately, and by the next morning General Grant hoped to have his army concentrated between the Confederates and their Capital. Warren and Hancock were to move by the Brock road, and Sedgwick and Burnside by a longer route through Chancellorsville. The trains were gotten off safely, and at dark the 5th corps began its march.

The movement of the trains, however, had aroused General Lee's suspicions, and during the afternoon he became convinced that Grant meditated a change of position. Being uncertain, however, whether the Federal commander was moving upon Richmond or Fredericksburg, General Lee directed General R. H. Anderson, commanding Longstreet's corps, to withdraw from his position in the intrenched line, and be in readiness to march upon Spottsylvania Court House in the morning. Anderson promptly drew out his men, and endeavored to find a suitable place for a bivouac, but, being unsuccessful in this effort, owing to the burning woods, and thinking it would be well to gain as much time as possible, he determined to take the responsibility of commencing his march without delay, and accordingly set out that night at about ten o'clock.*

The next day General Lee being satisfied that the whole Federal army was in motion, marched with Ewell's and Hill's corps to join Anderson.† General Grant in his report states that Lee moved by the shorter line, but in this he is mistaken. The

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 441.

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
" May 8, 1864.

"HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR:

"The enemy have abandoned their position, and are marching towards Fredericksburg. I am moving on their right flank.

(Signed)

R. E. LEE."

road by which the Confederates reached Spottsylvania is about of equal length with the Brock road, or if any shorter the difference is less than a mile.

Anderson marched all night, and early the next morning, the 8th, arrived at the heights around Spottsylvania Court House, where he found Fitz Lee's cavalry hotly engaged with Warren's advancing columns. In order to impede Grant's progress, the cavalry had been thrown out on the 7th, with orders to hold the Brock road, as long as possible and endeavor by every means in their power to harass the enemy on their march. These instructions were well carried out, and from Todd's Tavern on the Brock road to the immediate vicinity of Spottsylvania Court House, Fitz Lee contested the road stubbornly with the enemy, barricading it in many places with fallen trees, and inflicting severe loss upon the parties sent to clear away these obstacles.

When Anderson reached Spottsylvania Court House on the morning of the 8th, he found it in possession of a detachment of Federal cavalry, which had succeeded in occupying the village in advance of General Warren's corps. General Anderson immediately divided his command, sending a part of it to drive off the Federal cavalry from the village, and hurrying with the rest to the relief of Fitz Lee.

Warren continued to press on, thinking that the force in his front was nothing but the dismounted cavalry he had been driving before him all night; but as his advanced division commenced to ascend the ridge on which Anderson had formed his line, it was met with such a withering discharge of musketry that it broke and rushed back in confusion, with the loss of its commander, who was severely wounded. At the same time the Federal cavalry were driven from the Court House, and Anderson, bringing his whole force into line prepared to hold the position which both armies sought so eagerly. General Warren hurried up the remainder of his corps, consisting of Crawford's,

Griffin's, and Cutler's (Wadsworth's) divisions, and made a spirited attack upon Anderson's two divisions, but was unable to carry the position.*

After this repulse Warren remained in front of Anderson's line, and commenced to intrench, being unwilling to risk a new attack until the arrival of reënforcements. In the afternoon he was joined by the 6th corps, under General Sedgwick, but it was almost dark before the enemy completed their dispositions for another attack. Just about dusk Crawford's division was thrown forward, but was repulsed with heavy loss. Ewell's corps commenced to take position as Crawford began his attack, and the enemy striking it suddenly while it was marching by the flank, drove it back some distance, capturing about one hundred prisoners, but were unable to follow up their advantage and suffered more than they had gained by their attack.†

During the night all of Ewell's corps came up, and the next morning General Hill arrived, but being disabled by sickness was compelled to relinquish the command of his corps temporarily to General Early.

* The following is General Lee's bulletin to the War Department :

"NEAR SPOTTSYLVANIA C. H. — 2.30, P. M.,
via ORANGE C. H.

"TO HON. J. A. SEDDON :

"After a sharp encounter with the 5th army corps, (Warren's) and Torbert's division of cavalry, General R. H. Anderson, with the advance of the army, repulsed the enemy with heavy slaughter, and took possession of the Court House.

"I am most thankful to the Giver of all victory that our loss is small.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
May, 8, 1864. — 9 P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR :

"After the repulse of the enemy from Spottsylvania Court House, this morning, receiving reënforcements, he renewed the attack on our position, but was again handsomely driven back.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

On Monday morning, May 9th, the entire Federal army was concentrated before Spottsylvania Court House ; but under very different circumstances from those hoped for by General Grant when the march began. That officer had been thwarted again in his designs by General Lee, and he now found the Confederate army in the position he had hoped to gain, and barring his advance as thoroughly as it had done in the Wilderness. He might have moved still farther to the right, and have manœuvred Lee out of his position ; but, being anxious to carry out his programme of "attrition," he resolved to attack the Confederate line, and drive General Lee from the heights.

The line held by General Lee was very strong. It extended along a range of heights, enclosing Spottsylvania Court House in a semi-circle, and running almost due north at Longstreet's position, and sweeping around to the west and south along Ewell's and Hill's lines. The crest was crowned with strong earthworks protected by a formidable abatis, and the approaches, made difficult by the low, dense undergrowth in front, were swept at all points by the fire of both infantry and artillery. Anderson's corps formed the right, stretching from the River Po, northward to the Court House. Ewell was in the centre, with his line running almost east and west, and Hill held the left, with his left flank slightly drawn back towards the south.

The Federal line was formed with Warren and Sedgwick in the centre, Hancock on the right, and Burnside on the left. The greater portion of the 9th was occupied by the enemy in getting their troops into position. The Confederate sharpshooters kept up an active fire upon them, and among others killed General Sedgwick, the commander of the 6th corps, and the ablest and most esteemed of all the subordinate generals in the Federal army.

Between Hancock's position and that held by General Hill's corps was the valley of the river Po, and through this valley

wound one of the branches of this stream. During the afternoon of the 9th, Hancock was directed to cross the river, and endeavor to intercept a Confederate wagon train which was seen beyond the stream, moving into Spottsylvania Court House. He succeeded in passing the Po, about three miles west of the Court House. The river was at that point defended by a small force, but before he could penetrate over a few hundred yards beyond it, it was too dark to attempt anything further, and during the night the Southern wagons were taken into General Lee's lines in safety.

The next morning, the 10th, General Hancock continued to advance, and discovered A. P. Hill's corps strongly intrenched along the east bank of the Po, and commanding the crossings of the river. About half past two o'clock Hancock received orders to withdraw across the Po to his original position, and, while engaged in this movement, Barlow's division, which was covering his withdrawal, was attacked by Heth's division of Hill's corps, and driven with heavy loss for some distance. Barlow succeeded, however, in rejoining his corps, and Heth's men were withdrawn to their original line.

While Hancock's movement on the extreme Federal right had been going on, General Warren, with the 5th corps, was engaged in assaulting the position of Field's division which constituted Hill's right. Twelve assaults were made by the enemy, and each one was repulsed with loss to them. When Hancock was withdrawn across the Po, he was directed to unite his corps with the 5th, for a decisive charge upon Field. At five o'clock these two corps made a fierce attack upon Field's line, and at first succeeded in gaining possession of the first line of breastworks; but they were quickly dislodged from the works, and driven down the hill with heavy loss. Another charge was made just before dark, and was repulsed with even more promptness and decision. The Federals fought gallantly, but they gained no advantage.

About the same time a part of the 6th corps assailed the division of General Rodes, on the left of Ewell's position, and broke his line, gaining possession of the works, together with nine hundred prisoners and six guns. Rodes rallied his men, and falling suddenly upon the enemy drove them out of the works, recaptured his guns, and reëstablished his line.

At dark the firing ceased, the enemy having failed in all their assaults.*

These attacks on his left induced General Lee to believe that Grant's main effort would be made in that quarter, and during the night of the 10th and the greater part of the 11th he moved troops from other points to strengthen that wing. General Grant, however, had decided that the Southern left was too strong to be successfully assailed, and had detected the weak point in Lee's line. He at once determined to attack it with Hancock's corps, supported by his whole army, and spent the 11th in making his dispositions for the battle.

* "SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, *via*
GUINEA'S, MAY 11.

"HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General Grant's army is intrenched near this place on both sides of the Brock road. Frequent skirmishing occurred yesterday, and to-day each army is endeavoring to discover the position of the other. To-day the enemy shelled our lines, and made several assaults with infantry against different points, particularly on our left, held by General A. P. Hill. The last, which occurred after sunset, was the most obstinate, some of the enemy leaping over the breastworks. They were easily repulsed, except in front of Dole's brigade, where they drove our men from their position, and from a four-gun battery there posted. The men were soon rallied, and by dark our line was reëstablished and the battery recovered.

"A large body of the enemy moved around our left, on the evening of the 9th, and took possession of the road about midway between Shady Grove Church and the Court House. General Early, with a part of Hill's corps, drove them back this evening, taking one gun and a few prisoners. Thanks to a merciful Providence, our casualties have been small. Among the wounded are Brigadier-Generals Hays and H. H. Walker.

"R. E. LEE."

The point which he chose for his next attack was in the right centre of the Southern line. It was a salient which had been thrown out to cover a hill a few hundred yards in front of the general line, and to prevent the enemy from occupying it with their artillery. It was an unfortunate piece of engineering that included this hill in Ewell's intrenchments, as the sequel will show. Past the hill on the north side swept a ravine, which presented a convex line to the hill, the two approaching each other like circles that touch but do not cut each other. This salient was held by the division of General Edward Johnson, of General Ewell's corps. Through some mistake, on the night of the 11th, General Johnson's artillery was withdrawn from his line, thus leaving him to hold it with only his infantry. General Johnson detected the concentration of the enemy in his front, about midnight, and informed General Ewell of it, at the same time asking to have his artillery sent back to him. General Ewell promptly ordered the guns back, but it was nearly five o'clock before they began to get into position again, and before they were ready for action the battle opened.

Hancock had massed his corps in front of the position of General Johnson on the night of the 11th, and at half past four o'clock on the morning of the 12th of May, began his advance, taking advantage of the ravine to shelter his troops as they approached the Southern works. With an impetuous rush the Federals poured over the breastworks, and were met by Johnson's troops in a stubborn hand-to-hand fight. Only two pieces of Johnson's artillery had been unlimbered, and these were of but little use. After a desperate resistance his line was overwhelmed. Over three thousand prisoners, including Generals Johnson and G. H. Stewart, and twenty-five pieces of cannon were captured, and the enemy remained in possession of the works.

Elated by his success, Hancock pressed on towards the in-

terior line of works which had been thrown up in the rear of Johnson's position. He had cut the Southern line in two, and there was danger that he would drive the wings apart if not checked. General Gordon, commanding Early's division, promptly threw forward his troops, and Rodes and Wilcox hurried forward to his assistance. This force gallantly met the eager advance of the enemy, and forced them back. For hours the battle raged with great fury, the enemy endeavoring to break the new line, and meeting a bloody repulse each time they advanced.

Supposing, from the determination with which General Lee maintained his ground, that the other portions of the Confederate line had been greatly weakened to furnish troops for the right centre, General Grant ordered Generals Warren and Burnside at eight o'clock to attack the Southern right and left wings. These officers assaulted vigorously, but were repulsed with much loss.

The battle continued throughout the entire day, and did not cease altogether until midnight, when General Lee drew in his lines on the interior position. He had failed to recapture the works won from Johnson, but the enemy had been confined to them and foiled in all their efforts to penetrate farther, or to break the line at other points.

The Southern losses were very heavy during the engagements up to this period, but they were nothing like those of the Federal army. General Grant had "hammered away" nearly a third of his army, but he was not discouraged. After the great battle of the 12th he wrote to his Government :

"We have now ended the sixth day of very heavy fighting. The result to this time is much in our favor. Our losses have been very heavy, as well as those of the enemy. I think the loss of the enemy must be greater. We have taken over five thousand prisoners in battle, while he has taken from us but

few except stragglers. I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer."

General Lee having now retired to an interior and shorter line, General Grant determined to move around to his right, and try to force that wing back. General Warren was sent over to the right to unite with Burnside, which he succeeded in doing after an arduous night march on the 13th. On the 14th, the 5th and 9th corps made a vigorous attack on Wilcox's division and were "handsomely repulsed." Later in the day Lane's and Mahone's brigades made a dash at the enemy's left, capturing four hundred prisoners and several standards, and almost taking General Meade prisoner. The remainder of the day was spent in skirmishing, which grew heavier towards twilight.*

The 6th corps was moved over to the Federal left, on the 14th, and this, changing General Grant's entire position, necessitated the opening of a new base at Aquia Creek, which was accomplished on the 16th of May.† Previous to this the enemy drew their supplies from Port Royal.

General Grant now determined to make another effort against

* "SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, May 14,
via GUINEA'S STATION, May 15.

"The enemy assaulted Wilcox's lines this morning and was handsomely repulsed. Mahone's and Lane's brigades attacked his left, capturing three hundred prisoners, and four stands of colors. Light skirmishing along the whole line during the day. The enemy seems to be moving toward our right. In the afternoon Wright's and Harris' brigades assaulted his left, and captured some prisoners and a stand of colors.

R. E. LEE."

† "SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE,
via GUINEA'S STATION, May 16, 1864.

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT DAVIS:

"The enemy has made no movement against our position to-day. He has retired his right and extended his left towards Massaponax Church, occupying the line of the Ny river, his main force being apparently east of that stream.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE."

Ewell's line, and on the 18th threw forward Hancock's, Burnside's, and Wright's (6th) corps against the works in the rear of the salient Hancock had carried on the 12th. The enemy pressed forward until they reached the abatis in front of the Southern works, when they were brought to a stand by this formidable obstacle, and broken by the heavy fire of the Confederates. Finding their task a hopeless one, they fell back and abandoned the attack.*

The losses of the Federal army since the passage of the Rapidan, now amounted to more than forty thousand men, and the troops began to grow dispirited. It was certain that the Confederate army could not be forced from its position on the heights of Spottsylvania, and there was but one way to dislodge it,—to move towards Richmond. This General Grant determined to do.

IV.

THE MARCH TO THE CHICKAHOMINY.

General Grant began his preparations to withdraw on the afternoon of the 19th. This movement was observed by General Lee, who threw out Ewell's corps, and struck the Federal left a severe blow, forcing General Grant to delay his movement until the night of the 21st, when it was commenced.†

* "SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, May 18, 7 P. M.
via MILFORD, 19th.

“HON. J. A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

“The enemy opened his batteries on a portion of Ewell's line, and attempted an assault, but failed. He was easily repulsed. Subsequently he cannonaded a portion of Hill's lines, under Early. The casualties on our side are very few.

R. E. LEE.”

† General Grant's Report, p. 7.

Feeling assured that Grant was moving to occupy the line of the North Anna, General Lee left his position at Spottsylvania, and marching rapidly by a shorter route than that chosen by the Federal army, reached the south side of the North Anna before Grant arrived at Milford, at which place the Federal advance encamped on the 22nd of May. On the morning of the 23rd the Federal army reached the North Anna River, but only to behold its old antagonist in position on the south side, and ready to meet it again.

The position which General Lee held here was an important one. Less than two miles back of the river was Hanover Junction, the point of intersection of the Virginia Central and Richmond and Fredericksburg railroads. The possession of the former road was important to the Confederates, as it was their only direct line of communication with the Shenandoah Valley.

Nothing daunted, however, General Grant determined to force a passage of the river, and "hammer away" at this position also. General Hancock was on the Federal left, and General Warren on the right. The position of the former brought him opposite the crossings of the Fredericksburg Railroad and Telegraph (old stage) road, while the latter was in front of Jericho Ford about six miles to the right of the railroad bridge. Both of these commanders were ordered to effect a passage of the river. Jericho Ford was unguarded, but the Telegraph bridge was defended by a small force. Warren passed over unmolested, and advanced towards the Central Railroad. Near Noel's Station, he was encountered by Wilcox's division of A. P. Hill's corps. Hill brought up his other divisions as rapidly as possible, and in a brisk engagement forced General Warren to halt for the rest of the day.

At the same time Hancock, moving forward on the Federal left, made a sharp attack on the three regiments guarding the

Telegraph bridge, and drove them over the river, gaining possession of the bridge, which he held during the night, repulsing several attempts of the Confederates to destroy it.* The next morning, the 24th, Hancock's corps crossed to the south side of the river.

If General Grant supposed that he was now in a position to attack General Lee with a prospect of success, he was destined to disappointment. Feeling assured of the strength of his position, General Lee had made no effort to resist General Warren's passage of the river, and only checked him until his own line could be thoroughly established. On his right he had simply lured General Hancock over the river, and on the morning of the 24th, he was sincerely desirous that General Grant should attack him.

The reader will see by a glance at the map that the Telegraph bridge and Jericho Ford are about six miles apart. About a mile above the former are the Oxford Mills. At this point, General Lee established his centre, clinging close to the river. His right stretched back beyond Hanover Junction, in an almost due southerly course, and rested on a series of extensive and impenetrable marshes, while his left, running almost due west, rested on Little River. Both flanks were thus made secure by marshes and rivers, and the rest of the line was strongly intrenched. The centre resting on the North Anna was interposed directly between the right and left wings of the Federal army, cutting off all communication between them south of the river. Lee's right faced nearly eastward towards Hancock's, and his left

* "HANOVER JUNCTION, May 23, 10 P. M.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON:

"About noon to-day the enemy approached the Telegraph bridge on the North Anna. In the afternoon he attacked the guard at the bridge and drove it to this side. About the same time the 5th corps (General Warren's) crossed at Jericho Ford, on our left, and was attacked by General A. P. Hill and its advance checked.

R. E. LEE."

westward towards Warren's and Wright's corps, his line forming two sides of an obtuse-angled triangle. While he held this position it would be impossible for General Grant to attack him, except with a part of his forces, without making a double passage of the river, while the Confederates could concentrate on any endangered part of their line, or mass their forces and fall upon either the Federal right or left, at the same time preventing the other wing from going to its assistance. The conception was masterly, and without a blow defeated all General Grant's plans for an advance south of the North Anna, and also endangered the safety of the separated wings of his army.

In order to remedy this, General Burnside was ordered, on the 25th, to cross with the 9th corps at Oxford Mills, drive back Lee's centre from the river, and establish communication between Warren and Hancock. Burnside succeeded in crossing one division which was so roughly handled that he was compelled to withdraw it, and Warren in attempting to extend his left down the river to communicate with Burnside, was so vigorously assailed by Hill's troops that it was with difficulty that the division (Crawford's) endeavoring to accomplish this, could be brought off.*

General Lee had selected his position with great care, and his skill was richly rewarded. General Grant had gotten over the river, and into the trap set for him, but he was powerless to move forward, and might be equally unable to go back. Seeing his danger, General Grant wisely concluded to withdraw at

* The following dispatch partly relates the events of the 25th :

HON. JAMES A. SEDDON:

"TAYLORSVILLE, May 25, 9.30 P. M.

"The enemy have been making feeble attacks upon our lines to-day, probably with a view of ascertaining our position. They were easily repulsed."

"General Mahone drove three regiments across the river, capturing a stand of colors and some prisoners, among them an aid-de-camp of General Ludlow."

R. E. LEE."

once. Had General Lee's army been strong enough to permit him to assume the offensive then and there, the Federal commander would have found that it was a much easier matter to get into such a predicament than to get out of it, but it being General Lee's first duty to husband carefully the limited resources at his command, he was compelled by the weakness of his force to allow his antagonist to withdraw in safety.

On the night of the 26th of May, the Federal army withdrew in silence across the North Anna.

The Federal commander had been again baffled in his efforts to throw his army upon Lee's line of communication, and he now resolved to make a last effort to cut the Confederates off from Richmond before they should reach the defences of that city. Accordingly he directed his march towards the Pamunkey, which is formed by the union of the North and South Anna Rivers. To effect this march it was necessary to cut loose from his base at Port Royal; but he would be compensated for this by establishing a new base at the White House, near the mouth of the Pamunkey, which had served McClellan for a similar purpose in 1862. He intended crossing the Pamunkey at Hanover town, twenty miles northeast of Richmond, and then trying to throw his army over the Chickahominy before Lee could interfere, when the city would be at his mercy. But if, after passing the Chickahominy, he found the prospect of capturing Richmond unfavorable, he could move direct to the James River and unite his army with that of General Butler, then operating south of that river. On the night of the 26th, the 6th corps and Sheridan's cavalry commenced the movement, and crossed the Pamunkey at Hanover town on the morning of the 27th, readily driving off the small party of Confederate cavalry on the opposite bank. By the morning of the 28th the whole Federal army was south of the Pamunkey.

“Hanover town Ferry is northeast of Richmond twenty miles, by the most direct road, which crosses the Chickahominy at

Meadow Bridge, near the Central Railroad, and is known beyond the Chickahominy as the Hanovertown road. Another road to this ferry runs south four miles to Old Church and thence in a southwesterly direction by Old Cold Harbor to New Cold Harbor, Gaines' Mill and New Bridge to Richmond, entering the city over Union Hill. From the city to New Bridge this is known as the New Bridge or Nine-Mile road; beyond the New Bridge, as the Cold Harbor or Old Church road. Hanovertown ferry is three or four miles further from Richmond by this than the road previously mentioned. Hawes' Shop is three miles south of the ferry, on the direct road to Richmond. Hanover Court House is situated northwest of the ferry some eight or ten miles. — Another road from Richmond to Hanovertown Ferry is the Mechanicsville, which leaves the city by Howard's Grove, crosses the Chickahominy a couple of miles east of Meadow Bridge, and passing Dr. Lumpkin's residence, a point six miles from the city, known as Mechanicsville, falls into the Hanovertown road six miles further on and a mile north of Tottapota-moi Creek. Atlee's Station, on the Central Railroad, is nine miles north of Richmond and three miles northwest of Mechanicsville. From Atlee's to Old Cold Harbor on the Old Church road, as the crow flies, the distance is about nine miles; by county roads it is several miles further. Tottapota-moi Creek rises near Atlee's Station, and running southeast to Poll Green Meeting House, turns thence northeast and empties into the Pamunkey two miles below Hanovertown. Old Cold Harbor is ten miles from Richmond; New Cold Harbor, on the same road, is from a mile and a half to two miles nearer the city, and Gaines' Mill yet a quarter of a mile nearer. The country between Hanovertown and Mechanicsville by the direct road consists of large cleared fields and patches of heavy forest, there being no streams worthy of note except the Tottapota-moi; on the Old Church road the country is more wooded." *

* Richmond Examiner, June 13, 1864.

The withdrawal of the enemy was discovered by General Lee on the morning of the 28th, and as soon as it was ascertained that Grant was moving towards the Pamunkey, General Ewell was sent off towards Hawes' Shop to prevent him from reaching the Chickahominy, and the whole army followed immediately. Ewell reached his position near Hawes' Shop late on the 27th, and the next day was rejoined by the army.

On the 28th, General Grant threw forward his cavalry to Hawes' Shop, and supported it by strong detachments of infantry. Fitz Lee, who was temporarily in command of the Confederate cavalry, was advanced to meet this force, and ascertain if Grant's whole army had crossed at Hanover town. Fitz Lee attacked Sheridan and drove him back upon his infantry supports, and then, having accomplished the objects of the reconnoissance, drew off his command in the direction of Richmond. The 29th, and 30th were occupied by General Grant in reconnoitering his adversary's position. Heavy skirmishing was of frequent occurrence between the two armies. On the afternoon of the 30th, General Hancock's corps developed the position of the Southern army, which had been carefully selected on the south side of Tottapotamoi Creek. Hancock crossed the creek, and advanced towards Ewell's line, but was driven back, after a sharp fight, to his own army in front of Hawes' Shop.

The hostile lines now stretched east and west over an extent of country about ten miles in length—the Confederates behind the Tottapotamoi, with their left at Atlee's Station on the Central Railroad, their centre in front of Mechanicsville, and their right at Cold Harbor on the Chickahominy; the Federals, on the north bank of the creek, threatening Atlee's Station with their right, and gradually moving their left towards the Chickahominy.

V.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF COLD HARBOR.

General Grant's first intention seems to have been to force a passage of the Chickahominy, at or in the neighborhood of Meadow Bridge, but, finding that this could not be effected without driving the Confederate army from its position which covered this bridge, as well as that at Mechanicsville, and the New Bridge, he determined to move around Lee's right, and attempt to pass the river at Cold Harbor. Upon reaching the Pamunkey, General Grant had directed General Butler to send him all the men he could spare. Butler detached a force of sixteen thousand men, under General W. F. Smith, and sent it in transports to the White House, where it debarked on the 30th of May. General Grant now ordered General Smith to move out from the White House and occupy New Cold Harbor. A mistake was made in the order, and Smith was sent to New-castle on the Pamunkey, ten or fifteen miles out of the way. Discovering the mistake in his orders, he countermarched his corps, and arrived in the neighborhood of New Cold Harbor, where the 6th corps had just come up, on the afternoon of June 1st.*

Meanwhile General Lee had been reënforced by Breckenridge's command of two thousand men from the Valley of Virginia, and Hoke's and Pickett's divisions from Beauregard's army south of the James. This brought his force to about forty-four thousand men of all arms, and barely covered his losses in the campaign. While holding his line on the Tottapotamoi he had also been careful to watch the Federal left, as

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 482.

he was convinced that Grant would endeavor to secure the bridges in the rear of Cold Harbor. Grant had scarcely put the 6th corps in motion before the march was discovered by General Lee. Anderson was at once dispatched with Kershaw's division to occupy the heights around New Cold Harbor and Gaines' Mill, and Hoke's division was hurried to his assistance. Later in the day a part of Hill's corps and Breckenridge's division were also sent to New Cold Harbor.

After leaving Gaines' Mill, on Powhite Creek, the road from Richmond to Cold Harbor ascends a long, high hill. Near the brow of this hill, stands New Cold Harbor, and from this point to Old Cold Harbor, about a mile and a half to the southwest, is a very gently sloping plain. The ridge of this hill or high land runs from New Cold Harbor in a southeasterly direction, and ends abruptly three hundred yards from the Chickahominy, at the bridge by which General McClellan withdrew his defeated troops after the first battle in June 1862, ten miles from Richmond.

On the night of the 31st of May, General Sheridan occupied Old Cold Harbor with his cavalry, and threw out a strong detachment to seize the heights at New Cold Harbor to gain which the 6th Federal corps, and Anderson's Confederate corps were hastening. Anderson came up on the 1st of June, with Kershaw's and Hoke's divisions, and attacking Sheridan drove him back towards Old Cold Harbor, and secured the heights around New Cold Harbor and Gaines' Mill, which he at once proceeded to fortify. Breckenridge and Heth also arrived by noon, and by two o'clock the heights were held by a force too strong to be driven from them without a general engagement.

In the afternoon, the 6th corps and the corps of General Smith reached Old Cold Harbor. General Meade, who had established his headquarters at that place, gave orders for an immediate attack for the purpose of gaining possession of the

heights. At four o'clock Wright and Smith attacked a part of Hill's line immediately behind Old Cold Harbor. They succeeded in carrying the first line of rifle pits, but were driven from them. They fell back only a few hundred yards, however, and immediately commenced to fortify their position.*

The next day, June 2nd, General Grant directed General Burnside to withdraw his corps from the Tottapotamoi, and take position at Cold Harbor. Warren's corps was to cover the movement, after which it was to follow Burnside to the Chickahominy. While this movement was in process of execution, Ewell's corps moved around by the Mechanicsville road, and fell upon Warren's right near Bethesda Church, driving it in with vigor. Pressing on, three strongly intrenched lines were carried, and the enemy driven back for nearly a mile, with the loss of over five hundred prisoners.

The night of the first and the whole of the second of June were spent by the Confederates in strengthening their position, so that by dark on the second, the line which they held was even stronger than that they had occupied at Spottsylvania Court House. Their right was within a few hundred yards of the Chickahominy on the New Cold Harbor ridge, the interval between being occupied by an impassable swamp, and their

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
JUNE 1, 1864, P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"There has been skirmishing along the lines to-day. General Anderson and General Hoke attacked the enemy in their front this forenoon, and drove them to their intrenchments. This afternoon the enemy attacked General Heth and were handsomely repulsed by Cooke's and Kirkland's brigades. Generals Breckenridge and Mahone drove the enemy from their front, taking about one hundred and fifty prisoners. A force of infantry is reported to have arrived at Tunstall's station from the White House, and to be extending up the York River Railroad. They state that they belong to Butler's forces.

"Respectfully,

"R. E. LEE, General."

left extended over to the Tottapotamoi, making their line about six miles in length. Anderson's corps, and the divisions of Breckinridge and Hoke, and a part of Hill's corps held the works on the Cold Harbor ridge, and the remainder of Hill's troops and Ewell's corps held the centre and left. The Federal line was somewhat longer. The right, under General Burnside, was near Bethesda Church, the left was in front of McGehee's house, under Hancock, and the interval was filled with the corps of Wright, Smith and Warren, in the order named. Sheridan's cavalry was thrown out on the left of Hancock, from Dispatch Station to the neighborhood of Bottom's Bridge.

Both armies were in position by nightfall on Wednesday, June 2d, and General Grant determined to assault the Southern lines at dawn the next morning. There was much to inspire both armies in the conflict. The ground on which the battle was to be fought was the same that had been made memorable by the battle between Lee and McClellan two years previous. The positions of the armies, however, were changed. Lee, in 1864, held almost the same line that he won from McClellan in 1862; while Grant held the greater portion of the old line of the Confederates; the Federals this time attacking, and the Confederates defending, the Cold Harbor ridge.

At half-past four o'clock on Thursday morning, June 3d, just as the breaking day gave light enough to guide the troops, the battle began. The attack was made simultaneously along the whole line. Hancock opened the engagement by a sudden rush against the works held by Breckenridge's command on the extreme right of the Confederate line, driving the troops from them, and gaining possession of three guns of Reid's battery, which were at once turned upon the Confederates. Instantly Breckenridge's men rallied on Finnegan's Florida brigade which

dashed forward with a yell. A fierce struggle took place in the works, and, in a quarter of an hour after the attack began, Hancock was driven back, and Breckenridge's line reestablished. Not discouraged by this repulse, however, Hancock made repeated attempts, in as many as seven distinct charges, to carry Anderson's works, but each time was driven back with fearful loss.

The corps of Generals Wright and Smith were hotly engaged on Hancock's right. They endeavoured again and again to carry the works in front of them (a part of Anderson's line), but in vain. They lost heavily, and could with difficulty maintain the new position which they had taken up in advance of their original position of the morning.

The attack on Early, on the left, was less vigorous. Warren had been too severely handled on the afternoon of the 2d to attempt much, and Burnside spent the best part of the morning in getting his men into position to assail Early's extreme left, under General Heth. He made two attacks on Heth's line, which were easily repulsed.

The battle ended between eleven and twelve o'clock. Every attack of the enemy had been successfully repelled, and the fight closed with the Confederates in full possession of their works. The Southern loss was insignificant, — scarcely twelve hundred, if so much, — while on the side of the Federals the losses reached the enormous sum of thirteen thousand men.*

While the engagement was in progress, the cavalry, under General Hampton, who had been appointed to succeed the lamented Stuart, were thrown out on Ewell's left. Moving towards Hawes' Shop, they encountered the cavalry division of General Wilson, of the Federal Army, strongly posted at that place. Hampton attacked them with a part of Gen. W. H. F.

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 487.

Lee's division, and drove them back upon Warren's corps, inflicting considerable loss upon them.*

The only change made in the Southern line after the battle was the withdrawal of Breckenridge's troops from the salient they had lost and regained. The line was straightened, and this weak point removed. When this was accomplished, Breckenridge, about nine o'clock that night, advanced his skirmish line to its original position. Immediately the enemy drove it in, at the same time making an effort to carry the line of battle. They were promptly repulsed. An attack was then made on Hoke's line with a like result. The firing then ceased for the night.†

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA.

" June 3, 1864—8.35, P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"About 4½, A. M., to-day, the enemy made an attack upon the right of our line. In front of General Hoke and part of General Breckenridge's line he was repulsed without difficulty. He succeeded in penetrating a salient in General Breckenridge's line and captured a portion of the battalion there posted.

"General Finnegan's brigade of Mahone's division, and the Maryland battalion of Breckenridge's command, immediately drove the enemy out with severe loss. Repeated attacks were made upon General Anderson's position, chiefly against his right, under General Kershaw. They were met with great steadiness and repulsed in every instance. The attack extended to our extreme left, under General Early, with like results. Later in the day it was twice renewed against General Heth, who occupied Early's left, but was repulsed with loss.

"General Hampton encountered the enemy's cavalry near Hawes' Shop, and a part of General William H. F. Lee's division drove them from their intrenchments. Our loss to-day has been small, and our success, under the blessing of God, all that we could expect.

Respectfully,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

June 4, 1864, 8.30., P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"Last night, after the date of my dispatch, Generals Breckenridge and Finnegan were attacked by the enemy as they were preparing to reestablish their

The failure of the main attack on the morning of the 3rd disheartened the Federal troops to a great extent. In the afternoon General Meade, wishing to renew the battle, directed each of his corps commanders to attack again without reference to the troops on his right or left. The order was transmitted to the army through the usual channels, and the word given to advance, but the men stood still, refusing to move, and turning deaf ears to the commands and entreaties of their officers.* They were convinced that it was impossible to carry the Southern works, for they had struggled gallantly for them during the morning, and it is but justice to add that their conduct was prompted by the wisdom of veteran soldiers, and not by cowardice.

After being repulsed in their efforts to carry Lee's line, the Federals fell back to a line in advance of that held by them on the 2d of June. This they proceeded to fortify, and by the morning of the 4th, they had thrown up a series of formidable works, and had commenced to lay siege to the position of the Confederate army. The opposite works were at some points three hundred yards apart, at others they were separated by a distance of less than fifty yards. The sharpshooters of both armies were constantly at work, save at rare intervals, when, by a sort of tacit understanding, both sides would cease from firing, and gaze at or talk with each other over their frowning ramparts. These "truces," as they were called, were very precarious. The least thing — the accidental discharge of a

skirmish line. The enemy was soon repulsed. Immediately afterwards an attack was made upon General Hoke's front, with a like result.

"Up to the time of writing, nothing has occurred along the lines to-day, except skirmishing at various points. The position of the army is substantially unchanged.

Respectfully,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 487.

musket, a shout, or the merest trifle — would cause the firing to be resumed, and the rumble of an empty wagon was sure to be followed by a cannonade.

The enemy's dead lay between the lines of the two armies, and the hot sun causing them to become very offensive, General Grant on the morning of the 5th, sent a flag of truce to General Lee, proposing that when the armies were not actually engaged, unarmed parties on both sides might be permitted to pass between the lines to succor the wounded and bury the dead belonging to them. To this General Lee replied that none of his dead or wounded were unburied or uncared for between the lines; that General Grant's proposition was irregular and could not be accepted; but that he would cheerfully grant any request from General Grant for this purpose if made in the usual manner. It seems that General Grant misunderstood this reply, for he sent a second flag of truce to General Lee, stating that he (Grant) would send forward a detail to bury his dead. General Lee at once notified General Grant that he had mistaken his answer, and that if a burial party was sent out without first obtaining permission under a flag of truce to perform its work, it would be warned off by the Southern pickets. General Grant then sent in a formal request for permission to bury his dead, and General Lee at once granted it.

The battle of Cold Harbor was decisive. It closed the overland campaign, and left General Grant again foiled in his effort to get between Lee and Richmond. In four days after the battle the Federal commander decided to abandon the north side, and transfer his forces to the south bank of the James.

The campaign was a total failure. It was begun with the hope of flanking Lee on the Rapidan and seizing his communications at Gordonsville. So far from accomplishing this, General Grant was attacked when he least expected, held back in the Wilderness, and compelled to abandon his original move-

ment. He then attempted to plant his army between Lee and Richmond at Spottsylvania Court House. In this he was foiled, and every effort to drive Lee from the line which barred the advance of the Federal army was repulsed with loss. The flank movement upon the North Anna was made only to find the Southern army in position across the Federal line of march again. The renewed effort to outflank Lee by way of the Pamunkey also failed, and the last great effort to force the passage of the Chickahominy at Cold Harbor was thwarted, and made at the terrible cost of thirteen thousand men. Then, having nothing else left for him, General Grant was forced to abandon the campaign, and seek a new base and a new scene of operations south of the James.

The losses in the campaign were very great. On the side of the Confederates they amounted to about eighteen thousand, while the Federals lost sixty thousand men, — more than ten thousand above the total strength of Lee's army.*

Yet, in the face of all this, it is the habit of the majority of writers on the Northern side to describe the campaign as successful for them. I can only say that a few more such successes would have brought the Union cause to total ruin.

Before passing to the narration of the movements which followed the battle of Cold Harbor, I must ask the reader's attention to matters in other quarters, bearing immediately upon this campaign.

VI.

THE CAMPAIGN IN THE VALLEY.

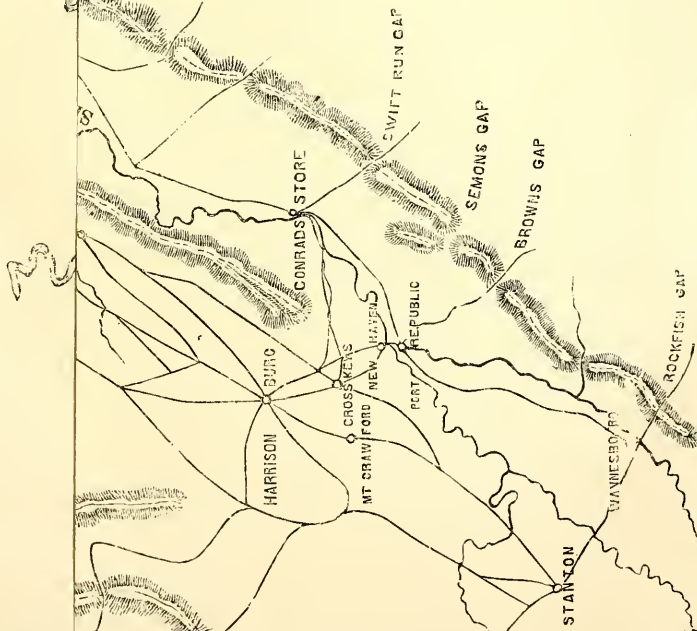
The reader will remember that a part of General Grant's programme was for General Crook to move through South-

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 491.

HAGERSTOWN

POTOMAC

MAP OF
THE
VALLEY OF VIRGINIA,
Drawn from actual Survey.
Scale of Miles.



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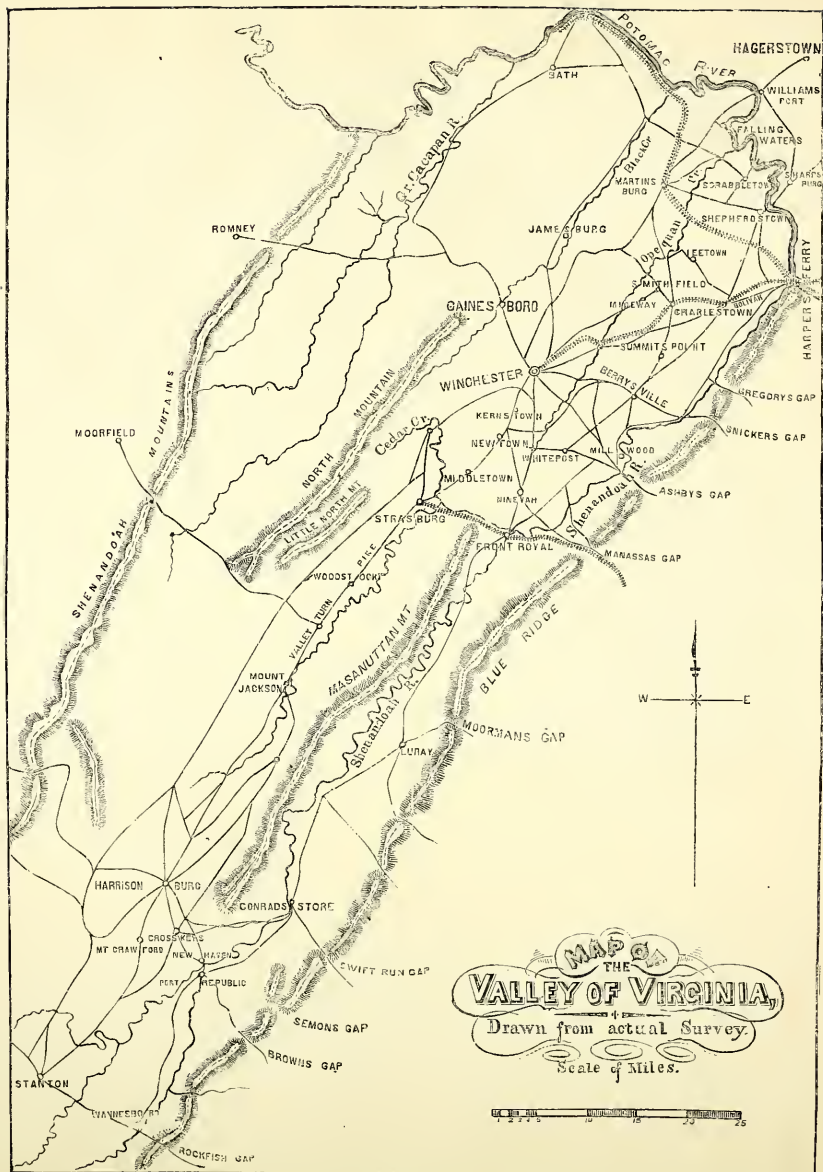
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* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 491.



MAP OF
THE
VALLEY OF VIRGINIA,
Drawn from actual Survey.
Scale of Miles.



western Virginia, and destroy the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, and for Sigel to advance as far as possible up the Valley of Virginia and destroy the Central Railroad. Both of these columns moved on the 1st of May. General Crook reached the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, cut it in several places, and then moved towards the Valley of Virginia.

Sigel moved up the Valley, meeting but little resistance until the 15th of May, when he was attacked and defeated with great loss, near New Market, by the command of General Breckenridge. Breckenridge drove Sigel hotly before him until Cedar Creek was reached, and then paused, being unable to continue the pursuit farther, and General Sigel escaped down the Valley.

Unfortunately Breckenridge was at this time withdrawn from the Valley and brought to Richmond to reënforce General Lee. This left the Valley defenceless, as the small force under General William E. Jones, which was left behind, was incapable of making a stand against any serious effort on the part of the Federals.

Just as Breckenridge was withdrawn, General Sigel was removed from his command, and succeeded by General Hunter, who was ordered by General Grant to resume Sigel's movement, penetrate into the Valley as far as he could, and, if, after capturing Staunton and destroying the railroads, he found it possible to reach Lynchburg, to march for that place, and occupy it.

Hunter at once began his march, and on the 5th of June attacked the little command of General Jones at Piedmont. Jones made a gallant resistance, but was defeated, himself killed, and fifteen hundred of his men — fully half of his command — and three pieces of artillery captured. Hunter then marched to Staunton, where, on the 8th of June, he formed a junction with the columns of Generals Crook and Averill.

Finding that no force of any importance lay between Staun-

ton and Lynchburg, he set out for the latter place, moving through Lexington. On his way he burned the Military Institute of Virginia and the residence of Ex-Governor Letcher, and during his march his men burned many private dwellings, and committed many other outrages upon the helpless people of the country — his conduct being far more brutal than that of General Pope in Culpepper in 1862. Hunter reached Lynchburg on the 16th of June, and at once commenced his preparations to attack the town, which was held by the small force hastily collected, and to which was added the command of General Breckenridge.

The news of Hunter's movement upon Lynchburg compelled General Lee to detach a part of his army to relieve the threatened city. Lynchburg was not only important as a depot of supplies, and as commanding the Confederate communications with Southwestern Virginia, but its occupation by the enemy would greatly endanger the safety of both Richmond and Petersburg. The corps of General Ewell was detached for the task, and as General Ewell was disabled by the injuries he received at Manassas in the fall of 1862, and from which he never fully recovered, the command of the corps was given to General Early. Early left the Chickahominy about the 14th of June, taking with him about twelve thousand men, and an unusually large supply of artillery. Marching rapidly from the Chickahominy, he reached Gordonsville, where he embarked on the cars, and arrived at Lynchburg on the 17th.

On the 18th General Hunter attacked the Confederate works and was repulsed. By the morning of the 19th all of Early's troops had arrived, and he at once advanced upon Hunter. The Federals were discovered in full retreat, General Hunter having come to the conclusion that he could secure nothing but his own defeat by remaining at Lynchburg. Early struck the rear of the Federal column a few miles beyond Lynchburg, threw it

into confusion, and captured a number of prisoners and thirteen pieces of artillery. He also pressed the enemy so hard that General Hunter decided not to retreat through the Valley, and adopted a circuitous route through Western Virginia, which opened to Early the way for the execution of the second part of the instructions he had received from General Lee, and which will be described farther on.

During his retreat General Hunter destroyed the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, tearing up the track and burning the bridges, from Lynchburg to Wytheville, where Crook and Averill had cut it in May, — a distance of one hundred and thirty-five miles. The damage done was very great, but the road was in running order again in sixty days.

VII.

THE CAMPAIGN ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

The reader will remember that a part of General Grant's programme was for the command of Major-General Butler to attack Richmond from the south side of the James River. This was the principal of the movements which were to be coöperative with that of the Army of the Potomac. General Grant's instructions to Butler were as follows :

“FORT MONROE, VA., April 2, 1864.

“GENERAL :

“In the spring campaign, which it is desirable shall commence at as early a day as practicable, it is proposed to have coöperative action of all the armies in the field, as far as this object can be accomplished.

“It will not be possible to unite our armies into two or three

large ones to act as so many units, owing to the absolute necessity of holding on to the territory already taken from the enemy. But, generally speaking, concentration can be practically effected by armies moving to the interior of the enemy's country from the territory they have to guard. By such movement they interpose themselves between the enemy and the country to be guarded, thereby reducing the number necessary to guard important points, or at least occupy the attention of a part of the enemy's force, if no greater object is gained. Lee's army and Richmond being the greater objects towards which our attention must be directed in the next campaign, it is desirable to unite all the force we can against them. The necessity of covering Washington with the Army of the Potomac, and of covering your department with your army, makes it impossible to unite these forces at the beginning of any move. I propose, therefore, what comes nearest this of anything that seems practicable. The Army of the Potomac will act from its present base, Lee's army being the objective point. You will collect all the forces from your command that can be spared from garrison duty — I should say not less than twenty thousand effective men — to operate on the south side of James River, Richmond being your objective point. To the force you already have will be added about ten thousand men from South Carolina, under Major-General Gillmore, who will command them in person. Major-General W. F. Smith is ordered to report to you, to command the troops sent into the field from your own department.

“General Gillmore will be ordered to report to you at Fortress Monroe, with all the troops on transports, by the 18th instant, or as soon thereafter as practicable. Should you not receive notice by that time to move, you will make such disposition of them and your other forces as you may deem best calculated to deceive the enemy as to the real move to be made.

“When you are notified to move, take City Point with as

much force as possible. Fortify or rather intrench, at once, and concentrate all your troops for the field there as rapidly as you can. From City Point directions cannot be given at this time for your further movement.

“The fact that has already been stated — that is, that Richmond is to be your objective point and that there is to be coöperation between your force and the Army of the Potomac — must be your guide. This indicates the necessity of your holding close to the south bank of the James River as you advance. Then, should the enemy be forced into his intrenchments in Richmond, the Army of the Potomac would follow, and by means of transports the two armies would become a unit.

“All the minor details of your advance are left entirely to your direction. If, however, you think it practicable to use your cavalry south of you so as to cut the railroad about Hicksford about the time of the general advance, it would be of immense advantage.

“You will please forward for my information, at the earliest practicable day, all orders, details and instructions you may give for the execution of this order.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General*.

MAJOR-GENERAL B. F. BUTLER.” *

It is rather difficult to understand from this letter what was the exact part assigned to General Butler; but, from various papers which I have consulted elsewhere, I have come to the conclusion that Butler was expected to move up the south bank, take Richmond or Petersburg, if possible, and if unsuccessful in that, keep the way open for General Grant to pass the James River should he be unable to defeat Lee before reaching Richmond.

* General Grant's Report p. 4.

Butler's force consisted of the 18th corps under General W. F. Smith, and the 10th corps, under General Q. A. Gillmore, which had been at Charleston, South Carolina. The cavalry division of General Kautz, then at Norfolk, was also placed under his orders. This army was almost as large as that under General Lee, numbering about thirty-one thousand men.* It rendezvoused at Yorktown and Gloucester Point towards the last of April, and, to conceal his real designs, Butler sent about four thousand infantry and cavalry up the Peninsula to threaten Richmond.

On the 4th of May, the Army of the James, as it was called, embarked in transports, and dropping down York River, sailed down the Bay, into Hampton Roads and the James River. On the 5th, City Point and Bermuda Hundreds† were occupied, the Confederates offering no resistance.

At the time of the landing of Butler's forces, the city of Petersburg and the country between the Appomattox and the James were almost entirely defenceless. Drewry's Bluff was held by a small garrison, but there was scarcely more than a regiment at Petersburg. The troops intended for the defence of the South Side had been sent off to the coast of North Carolina by General Bragg. They captured the town of Plymouth, — a barren and worthless victory, — but were thrown off to a point where they could do no good in the defence of the all-important line south of the James. When the authorities at Richmond found that the city was to be threatened from this quarter, they confided the defence of the South Side to General Beauregard, who was ordered to repair at once to his new command. General Beauregard left Charleston, bringing with him such troops as he could withdraw from the coast, and orders were sent to

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 461.

† A narrow neck of land at the intersection of the Appomattox and James Rivers, opposite City Point, about a mile distant.

Generals Hoke and Pickett to move up promptly from North Carolina with their divisions. The advanced brigade of General Pickett, accompanied by the General himself, reached Petersburg about the time the enemy occupied Bermuda Hundreds. General Beauregard was hurrying the rest of the troops forward as rapidly as possible, but they were still in North Carolina. General Bragg, now that the plans of the Federals had fully developed themselves, went to work energetically to repair his error in sending Pickett away, and appreciating the importance of Petersburg, did his best to make it secure, and had no idea of abandoning it, as has been unjustly charged against him.

On the 6th of May, Butler advanced a brigade, and battery under General Heckman, to Port Walthal Junction, about six miles from Petersburg, and the same distance from Bermuda Hundreds. A part of Haygood's South Carolina brigade was sent from Drewry's brigade to Port Walthal Junction. This force encountered Heckman's brigade on the afternoon of the 6th, and a sharp skirmish ensued, resulting in the enemy being forced back. Heckman returned to Bermuda Hundreds that night.

On the 7th, Butler, in accordance with General Grant's instructions, having strongly intrenched his front from river to river, moved towards the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad for the purpose of destroying the track. A part of Pickett's division had now reached Petersburg, and this force was thrown out to the railroad, which it covered from Port Walthal Junction to Chester, about half way between Richmond and Petersburg. Butler attacked at once, and was repulsed. That night Pickett, fearing an advance upon Petersburg, and not having men enough to hold it against a determined attack, resorted to strategy. All night he kept a number of locomotives on the railroads leading into Petersburg, running backwards and forwards with as much noise as possible, hoping to cause Butler to think that reënforce-

ments were pouring into Petersburg. The enemy made no advance during the night.

On the 9th General Butler again advanced against the railroad with his whole command. Upon reaching the road in the vicinity of Chester, Butler proceeded to destroy it. Then dividing his force, and leaving one part facing Richmond, he moved with the rest towards Petersburg. Driving in the Confederate skirmishers, he encountered the Southern line of battle drawn up in intrenchments behind Swift Creek, about three miles from the city. Slight skirmishing ensued, but no serious attack was made by the enemy. It was General Butler's intention to attack this line the next morning, but that night he was informed by his Government that Grant was driving Lee before him towards the Confederate Capital. Upon this he abandoned the movement against Petersburg, and resolved to march at once upon Richmond.* He doubtless hoped to carry the defences of that city south of the James, and either occupy it before Grant's arrival, or aid in its capture when the Army of the Potomac came up. On the 12th the Federal army moved in the direction of Richmond, the Confederate advanced forces falling back slowly until they reached their intrenched line on the left bank of Proctor's Creek. On the 13th the Confederates fell back from this line to the defences of Drewry's Bluff.

On the 13th General Beauregard's army reached Petersburg, and was rapidly thrown across to Drewry's Bluff, and posted in the line behind Proctor's Creek. The Confederate force now numbered about eighteen thousand, and its position was very strong.

Butler followed, and on the 14th occupied Beauregard's outer line of works in front of Drewry's Bluff. This line General Beauregard permitted him to occupy, desiring to draw him as

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 464.

far as possible from his gunboats, and thus enable his own army to operate on the Federal left flank. In order to occupy the line abandoned to him, Butler was compelled to "string out" his force, but he determined to attack the main line of the Confederates on the morning of the 16th.

This was the time appointed by General Beauregard for striking a blow at Butler. He had discovered that the interval of half a mile which extended between the Federal right and the James River was weakly guarded by cavalry, and he decided to turn Butler's position in that direction. He had stationed General Whiting's division at Port Walthal Junction to cover the approaches to Petersburg, and had thus in reality placed it around Butler's left flank and in the rear of the new Federal position. Appreciating this advantage, he ordered General Whiting to move out on the morning of the 16th, and throw his command across the neck from the Appomattox to the James, and thus cut off the Federals from their base at Bermuda Hundreds. In this way he hoped to surround and capture, or destroy Butler's whole command; and there was every reason to believe that the plan would be crowned with success.

At dawn on the morning of the 16th of May, General Beauregard made his attack. A thick fog covered the whole country, rendering it very difficult to distinguish the position of the enemy. The first attempt against the Federal right failed, but after a severe attack in front, the turning movement was renewed, and Smith was forced back from his position to a point farther in the rear, and Beauregard, then renewing his efforts, forced Butler's whole command back about two miles behind Ware Bottom Church, where they had thrown up a strong line of intrenchments when they first landed at Bermuda Hundreds.

During all this time, General Whiting lay quiet at Port

Walthal Junction, *fearing* that the enemy would attempt to advance upon Petersburg. Had he moved off early in the morning, he would have seized Butler's line of retreat, and the Federal army would have been ruined; but he deliberately refused to obey General Beauregard's instructions, and the brilliant and promising plan of the Confederate commander failed, simply through this act of insubordination.

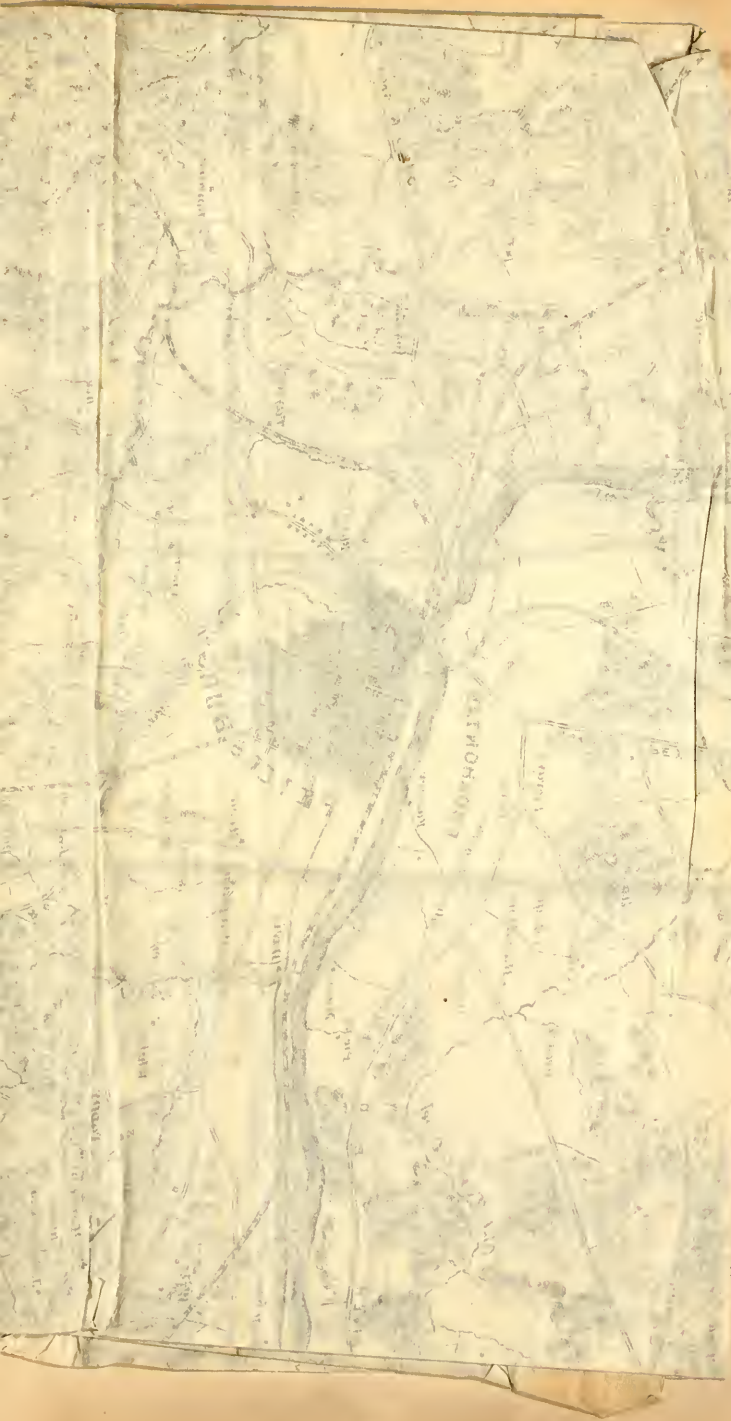
The Confederate loss in this battle was about three thousand, that of the enemy over four thousand.

General Beauregard followed Butler leisurely, and threw up a line of intrenchments, extending from Port Walthal Junction to the James River below Drewry's Bluff. On the 21st of May, Butler attacked this line with the hope of stopping its construction, but was repulsed with heavy loss. Frequent skirmishing now took place between the two armies, but Beauregard finished his intrenchments, and the Federal army, to use the forcible language of General Grant, "was as completely shut off from further operations directly against Richmond, as if it had been in a bottle strongly corked."*

Thus the early part of June found the army of General Butler, who had boastfully opened his campaign, "corked up" by Beauregard, the commands of Crook, Hunter and Averill, driven beyond the mountains, and the principal Federal army, under General Grant himself, abandoning the original campaign, and seeking a new base south of the James.

Everywhere success crowned the efforts of the Southern army.

* General Grant's Report, p. 8.



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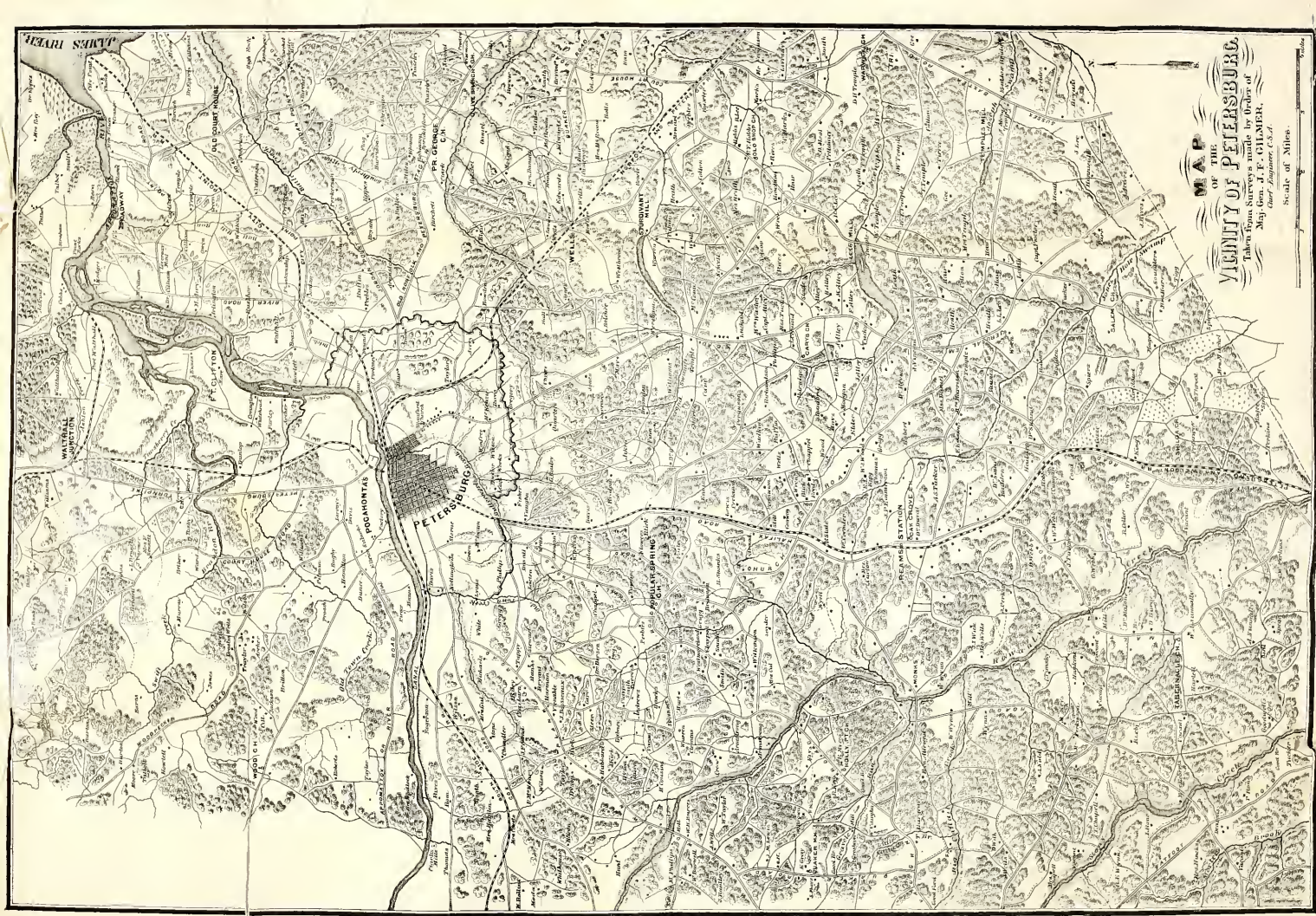
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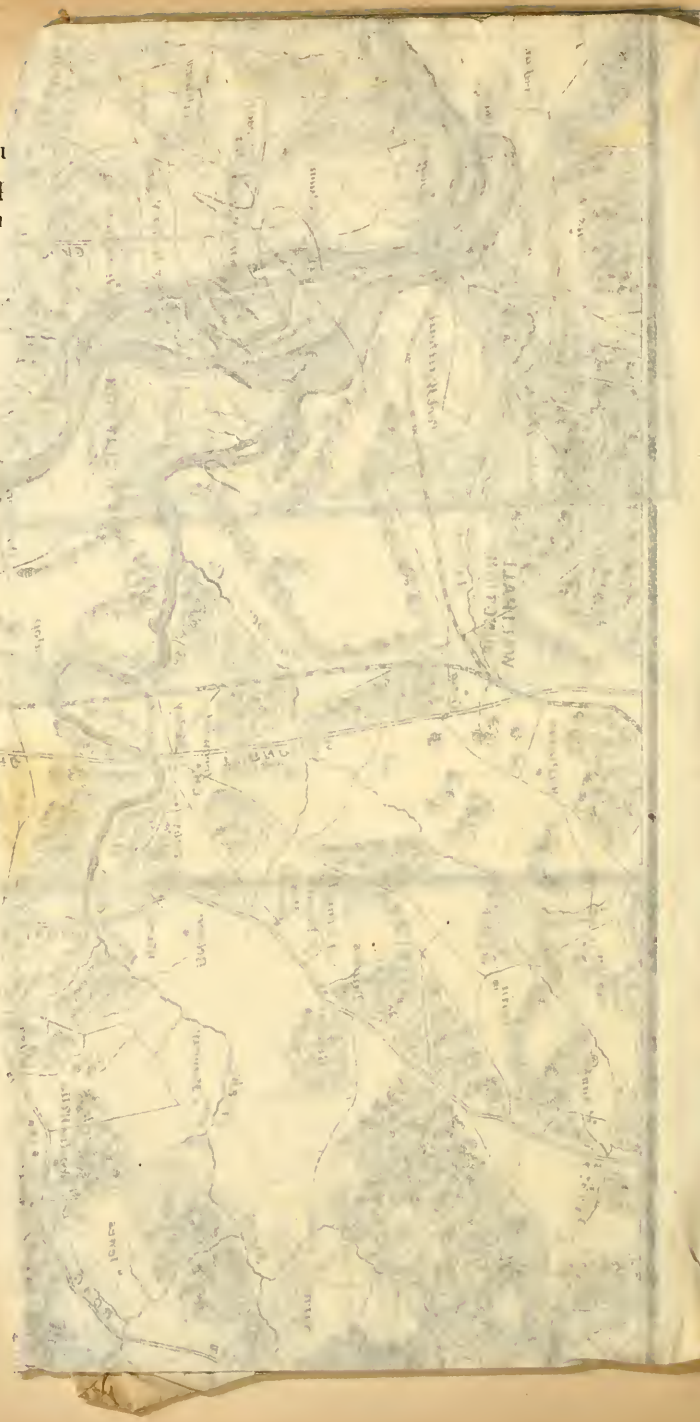
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Taken from Surveys made by Order of
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Scale of Miles

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XI.

THE SIEGE OF PETERSBURG.

JUNE, 1864 — MARCH, 1865.

I.

GRANT CROSSES THE JAMES RIVER.

IMMEDIATELY after the battle of Cold Harbor, General Grant determined to abandon the line of the Chickahominy, and seek a new base south of the James River. It required a considerable amount of moral courage upon his part to carry out this resolution, for it involved the abandonment of the favorite scheme of his Government — the covering of Washington City. General Grant, however, had a correct idea of the way in which this should be done, and he was convinced that the best way to cover Washington was to threaten Petersburg and Richmond. He had come to the conclusion that the weak point of Richmond was south of the James, and he determined to assail it there. It would have been well for him had he made his original movement from that quarter. He would have saved sixty thousand of his best troops, and have gained more decided advantages than he could have secured from any other plan.

Having decided to cross the James, General Grant at once commenced to put his plan into execution. On the 6th, he be-

gan to move his line closer to the Chickahominy,* by withdrawing Warren's corps to a point in rear of his centre, only ten miles from the Long Bridge. On the 7th, his line was drawn still closer to the York River Railroad, and Sheridan was sent with his cavalry to destroy the Central Railroad. This expedition was met by Hampton's cavalry at Trevelyhan's Depot, and repulsed with such loss that Sheridan was forced to retreat.

On the night of the 12th of June, the march of the Federal army began, Warren's corps moving in advance, preceded by Wilson's cavalry. Warren seized the Long Bridge, and throwing out his corps beyond it, made his dispositions to mask the crossing of the remainder of Grant's army.

General Lee discovered the withdrawal of the Federal army, on the morning of the 13th, and moved his forces towards the James River. A small cavalry force had been stationed in front of the Long Bridge to watch it, and on the morning of the 13th, this was driven back by Warren's corps about two miles beyond Riddle's Shop, which is the point where the road leading from Richmond to Charles City Court House, intersects the road leading to Malvern Hill. About two o'clock in the afternoon, Mahone's and Wilcox's divisions came to the assistance of the cavalry. An attack was made at once, and the enemy were driven back two miles beyond Riddle's Shop. The cross roads, and the road leading to Malvern Hill were recovered, and the enemy were forced back in the direction of the

* The following bulletin will show that this movement was quickly detected.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 6, 1864—8.30, P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"There has been very little skirmishing on the lines to-day.

"It was discovered early this morning that the enemy had withdrawn from the front of General Early on our left, and from the most of the front of General Anderson on the centre.

Respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

Long Bridge and the Chickahominy,* when night came on, and the advance was checked.

Meanwhile the Federal army had crossed the Chickahominy. Upon leaving Cold Harbor General Smith's corps was sent to the White House where it embarked in transports and returned to Bermuda Hundreds. The remainder of the army followed Warren over the Long Bridge, and the trains crossed on a ponton-bridge at Coles' Ferry. The march was then resumed towards the James River, which was reached at Wilcox's landing on the 14th. A delay was caused here by the failure to provide a sufficient quantity of materials for bridging the river. Hancock's corps was ferried over to Windmill Point in transports, and on the night of the 14th a bridge was thrown over the river, and by the 16th the entire Federal army was south of the James.

Grant's movements were known to General Lee,† but no

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 13, 1864—10 P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"A dispatch just received from Major-General Hampton, states that he defeated the enemy's cavalry near Trevilian's, with heavy loss, capturing five hundred prisoners, besides the wounded. The enemy retreated in confusion, apparently, by the route he came, leaving his dead and wounded on the field.

"At daylight this morning it was discovered that the army of General Grant had left our front. Our skirmishers were advanced between one and two miles, but failing to discover the enemy, were withdrawn. A body of cavalry and some infantry, from Long Bridge, advanced to Riddle's Shop and were driven back this evening nearly two miles, after some sharp skirmishing.

Respectfully,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 14, 1864—9 P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"Sir: The force of the enemy mentioned in my last dispatch as being on the Long Bridge road, disappeared during the night. It was probably advanced to cover the movement of the main body, most of which, as far as I can learn, crossed the Chickahominy at Long Bridge and below, and has reached James River, at Westover and Wilcox's Landing.

effort was made to interfere with him. The only fighting that occurred was between the Federal cavalry, and Fitzhugh Lee's division,* the former being doubtless thrown out by General Grant to keep back an advance of the Southern army while his troops were delayed at Wilcox's Landing. Much surprise was expressed in the South because General Lee permitted the enemy to pass the James without seeking to impede their movements. The truth was, however, that General Lee was not strong enough for such a venture. He had just detached Early's corps from his army, and was left with very little over thirty thousand men. With this force it would have been impossible to prevent the Federal army from crossing the river, and General Lee wisely considered it his duty to refrain from throwing away the lives of his men. He contented himself with occupying a position covering Richmond, from which he could watch Grant's army on the James, or go to the aid of Petersburg if the enemy should attempt to capture that city.

"A portion of General Grant's army, upon leaving our front at Cold Harbor, is reported to have proceeded to the White House and embarked at that place. Everything is said to have been removed, and the depot at the White House broken up. The cars, engine, railroad iron, and bridge timber that had been brought to that point, have also been shipped.

Very respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 15, 1864 — 6, P. M.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"SIR: After the withdrawal of our cavalry yesterday evening from the front of the enemy's works at Harrison's Landing, his cavalry again advanced on the Salem Church road, and this morning were reported in some force on that road and at Malvern Hill. General William H. F. Lee easily drove back the force at the latter point, which retreated down the river road beyond Carter's Mill. A brigade of infantry was sent to support the cavalry on the road to Smith's Store, and drove the enemy to that point without difficulty. Nothing else of importance has occurred to-day.

Very respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

II.

THE SIEGE BEGUN.

Petersburg lies twenty-two miles south of Richmond, on the right bank of the Appomattox. It is connected with the latter city by a railroad and an excellent turnpike. The Appomattox is navigable to the wharves of the city for light-draught vessels. Two railroads of importance begin at Petersburg, the road to Weldon leaving the city on the south, and the South Side Railroad, running to Lynchburg and connecting with the Richmond and Danville Railroad at Burkesville, about fifty-five miles from Petersburg, and the same distance from Richmond. Both of these railroads were important lines of supply, and their loss, together with that of the city, would sever the communications of Richmond with the country south of the Appomattox, and compel the evacuation or surrender of the Confederate Capital. As General Butler had said, Petersburg was the back door of Richmond.

In spite of its importance, however, it was left at the mercy of the enemy. General Lee could spare no troops for its defence, and the army of General Beauregard, from which Hoke's and Pickett's divisions had been taken, was too weak to hold the line in front of Butler, and the city also. Therefore, as the menace against Petersburg seemed to come from the direction of Bermuda Hundreds, General Beauregard was compelled to leave the city without a garrison, in order to oppose the enemy in his immediate front.

General Grant's first design after reaching the James River was to capture Petersburg, as the possession of that city by his

forces would compel General Lee to abandon Richmond and retire to the interior of the State. As he had cut loose from his base at the White House, and thus informed his adversary of his intention to cross the James, it was necessary to attempt to surprise Petersburg, for in a sudden and unexpected attack upon it lay his only hope of success.

Accordingly, as soon as General Smith's corps returned to Bermuda Hundreds, it was thrown across the Appomattox by means of a ponton-bridge near City Point. To this force was added a division of cavalry under General Kautz, and a division of negro troops under General Hinks. General Smith was ordered to march at once upon Petersburg and attack and capture the town, which was known to be undefended by any considerable force. On the morning of the 15th he set off, marching in three columns, to assail the city from the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad, to a point across to the City Point Railroad.

Soon after daylight the enemy appeared before some breast-works which had been hastily thrown up during the night of the 14th on Baylor's Farm, on the City Point road, six miles from Petersburg. These works were held by the 4th North Carolina cavalry and Graham's battery. General Smith threw forward the negro division to carry them, and, after a gallant struggle, the Confederates were driven back with the loss of one gun. Continuing to advance, General Smith arrived in front of the outer line of fortifications around Petersburg about noon. He had been informed that the fortifications were such "that cavalry could ride over them," and was somewhat surprised upon reconnoitering them to find them so strong and well constructed.* He was not aware, however, of the weakness of the force charged with their defence. He was induced to think the garrison very large by the excellent and heavy fire which the Confederate artillery maintained upon the Federal batteries,

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, pp. 500, 501.

which constantly compelled the latter to change their positions.* The Confederate force, however, consisted of about three batteries of artillery, a part of Wise's brigade, and the militia of the city of Petersburg, — a force scarcely sufficient to occupy the works, still less to hold them.

At a little before seven o'clock P. M. General Smith threw forward strong skirmish lines, — as many as six, in rapid succession, — and with these assaulted the works on the City Point and Prince George Court House roads. Three attacks were repulsed with loss to the enemy, but the fourth was successful. The Confederates were driven back and four of their guns captured. These pieces were at once opened on the remainder of the line, enfilading it completely, and by dark the enemy were in full possession of the whole line of outer works, and about twelve guns, together with several hundred prisoners.

The city was now at the mercy of the Federals. The Confederate army was hurrying from the James River to its assistance, but was too far off to render any aid, and the force in General Smith's front was inadequate to a successful defence of the town. Hancock's corps, which had been hurried forward by General Grant to coöperate with Smith, had come up, and all that was necessary was for General Smith to enter the town, drive out the little band occupying it, and take possession. This, however, he did not do, but contented himself with holding the works he had won, and waiting for the arrival of General Grant, who was on his way with the rest of his army.

As I have stated, General Beauregard's army was very small, but no sooner did he hear of the danger which threatened Petersburg than he withdrew a considerable part of his troops from Butler's front, and sent them to the assistance of Petersburg, where they began to arrive just after the outer line was carried by the enemy. General Lee hurried forward as soon as

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 502.

he learned of the attack on Petersburg, but as he was full forty miles from the Appomattox his advanced forces did not reach the city until the night of the 15th. The force there, however, was still very small, and before additional reënforcements could be sent, General Lee was compelled to turn aside to meet a menace from Butler.

General Lee had ordered General Beauregard not to evacuate his line until Anderson's corps, then moving from Richmond, should relieve him; but as the demand for troops at Petersburg was so urgent, and there was no prospect that Anderson would get up in time, General Beauregard assumed the responsibility of withdrawing his command into Petersburg. Butler then taking advantage of this withdrawal, occupied the Confederate works, and sent Terry's division towards the railroad to destroy it. Before this could be done, however, Terry was met by the head of Anderson's column — Pickett's division — and driven back to Bermuda Hundreds. Pickett's men, then following in pursuit, arrived before Beauregard's abandoned line, which Butler had occupied. General Lee did not wish to bring on an engagement at this point, and sent repeated orders to Pickett to halt. These orders were transmitted to the troops, but were of no avail. Pickett's men dashed on in spite of the efforts of their officers to stop them, and in a fierce, impetuous charge drove Butler into his own works and reëstablished Beauregard's line.*

* This drew from General Lee the following complimentary letter to General Anderson:

"CLAY'S HOUSE, June 17, 5 1-2 P. M.

"LIEUTENANT-GENERAL R. H. ANDERSON, *Commanding Longstreet's Corps.*

"GENERAL: I take great pleasure in presenting to you my congratulations upon the conduct of the men of your corps. I believe that they will carry anything they are put against. We tried very hard to stop Pickett's men from capturing the breastworks of the enemy, but could not do it. I hope his loss has been small.

I am, with great respect, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

Butler telegraphed that he had destroyed the railroad. This, however, was a mistake. The injuries he inflicted upon it were repaired in two or three hours, and General Lee was able on the same day to send troops over it to Petersburg.

Meanwhile General Hancock, who had assumed command of the two corps in front of Petersburg, to which his rank entitled him, spent the morning in cannonading the Southern lines, and shelling the city, which was full of non-combatants, notice not having been given them to leave it. He was ordered by General Meade to refrain from attacking again until the rest of the Army of the Potomac should have arrived. The morning was passed by the Confederates also in strengthening their position, and bringing up their forces.

The 9th Federal corps having arrived at noon, an assault was ordered by Burnside and Hancock at four o'clock in the afternoon. At the appointed hour these corps made a gallant charge upon the Southern line, and penetrating through an interval which had been unfortunately left on the right, poured into the works, and assailed the Confederates in them. The Southern troops then fell back to a second line nearer the town, and resisted the efforts of the enemy to carry that also.

About nine o'clock that night General Lee, with the greater portion of his army, arrived at Petersburg. He decided to retake the works lost in the afternoon, and at eleven o'clock P. M., an assault was ordered on the Federal right. The enemy were driven back, and the works at Howlett's House recaptured.*

* "HEADQUARTERS, ETC., June 17, 1864.

"HIS EXCELLENCY JEFFERSON DAVIS:

"At eleven o'clock last night we took the breastworks at Howlett's House. Other portions of the same line were taken. The battery at Howlett's is being reestablished. Five vessels have been sunk by the enemy in Trent's Reach. Ten steamers are within the Reach, behind the monitors. Some fighting has occurred near Petersburg, this morning, without result. I have ordered that the railroad at Port Walthal Junction, destroyed by the enemy yesterday, be repaired and re-opened.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

The next day, the 17th, Hancock and Burnside renewed the attack. The day was spent in heavy fighting, the enemy several times assaulting, but only to be repulsed. Towards dark, Burnside succeeded in carrying a part of the Southern intrenchments, but after nightfall was attacked and driven back to his own line.

Grant's whole army was now before Petersburg, and still holding to his original resolve to capture the city, he ordered a general assault for the morning of the 18th. In the meantime, however, General Lee had been engaged in constructing a formidable line of works immediately around the city, and on the morning of the 18th, he withdrew from the temporary line he had held in advance, and occupied that which was destined to become memorable for the siege it sustained. When the enemy moved forward a few hours later, they found that the works they had expected to storm were abandoned. General Grant then ordered an attack upon Lee's new line. At noon, Gibbon's division, of Hancock's corps, attacked and was repulsed. At six o'clock, an attack by the 2nd corps met the same fate; and later in the day, attacks by the 5th and 9th corps were also driven back.* The losses in these commands were very heavy.

These assaults cost General Grant many of his best men. From the time Smith made his first attack up to the repulse of the last assault of the 18th, the Federal army suffered a loss of about ten thousand men,† while the Confederate casualties did not amount to more than a third of that number. It was now plain that Lee's whole army was south of the James, and that it would be impossible to carry Petersburg by a direct attack. Therefore General Grant decided to lay siege to the city. The musket was laid aside for the spade, and in a few days the Federals were strongly intrenched in Lee's immediate front from the

* General Meade's Report.

† The exact number according to the Federal official statement, was 9,665.

river to the Norfolk Railroad. This line being made secure against attack, General Grant commenced to extend his left for the purpose of completing the investment of the city.

On the 21st, the 2nd and 6th corps moved towards the Weldon Railroad. By nightfall they secured a position across the Jerusalem plank road, and the next afternoon attempted to continue their movement to the railroad.

The movement had been detected on the previous evening, however, and General Lee had sent Mahone's division to put a stop to it. About two o'clock in the afternoon, Mahone struck the enemy at a point where an interval had been left between the 6th and 2d corps. Penetrating this gap in the Federal line, he made a spirited attack, doubling up the 2d corps and driving it back to the left of the plank road, capturing several entire regiments,* and a battery. Then driving the 2d corps into the works held by the 6th, Mahone withdrew his command as rapidly as he had struck the blow. He carried off the captured guns, several standards, and sixteen hundred prisoners.†

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 512.

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June, 22, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"Since Friday last there has been skirmishing along the lines in front of Bermuda Hundreds and around Petersburg. The Federal army appears to be concentrated at these two places, and is strongly intrenched.

"Yesterday, a movement of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, was made towards the right of our forces and Petersburg, in the direction of the Weldon railroad. The enemy was driven back, and his infantry is reported to have halted. His cavalry have continued to advance upon the road by a route further removed from our position.

"The enemy's infantry was attacked this afternoon, on the west side of the Jerusalem plank road, and driven from his first line of works to his second on that road, by General Mahone, with a part of his division. About sixteen hundred prisoners, four pieces of artillery, eight stands of colors, and a large number of small arms were captured.

Very respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

When the 2d and 6th corps moved out, a cavalry expedition under Generals Wilson and Kautz, was organized to operate against the railroads south of the Appomattox. This force left the position of the 2d corps on the evening of the 21st of June. Proceeding to Reams' Station on the Weldon Railroad, the Federal cavalry burned the depot, and destroyed the road for a considerable distance. Then striking across the country, they made for the South Side Railroad. Wilson marched direct to Nottoway Station, where he destroyed the track for several miles, and Kautz moved to Burkesville, the junction of the South Side and Richmond and Danville railroads, where he inflicted some damage upon the track.

As soon as General Lee was informed of this raid he sent Fitzhugh Lee's division of cavalry in pursuit of the enemy, and at the same time moved Mahone's infantry down the Weldon Railroad to cut off the retreat of the Federals if they attempted to return by the route by which they advanced. Fitzhugh Lee came up with Wilson near Dinwiddie Court House. Lee was repulsed in this encounter, but hung closely upon the Federal column, and the next day succeeded in throwing his command across Wilson's line of march near Nottoway Court House. Wilson made a vigorous attempt to break Lee's line, but was repulsed,* and the next day withdrew to Meherrin Station on

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 23, 1864.

"HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR.

"SIR: General W. H. F. Lee pursued the enemy's cavalry which advanced along the South Side Railroad. He had a skirmish on the 22d near Dinwiddie Court House, and the next day struck their column in flank, near Black's and White's, cutting it in two, and getting possession of the road by which they were moving towards Nottoway Court House.

"The road was held after an engagement which continued from 12, M., until dark, the enemy making repeated attempts to break through and rejoin his advance. He withdrew from General Lee's front at daylight on the 24th, leaving his dead and wounded on the field, taking the road to Hungarytown and Keysville. General Lee is still following them.

"Very respectfully, &c.,

"R. E. LEE, *General.*"

the Danville Railroad, where he formed a junction with Kautz. Not far from this point the railroad crosses the Staunton River on a covered bridge of considerable length. Wishing to destroy this important bridge, the Federals hastened towards the river. The bridge was guarded by a battalion of home guards — old men and boys, who had never been under fire — under Captain Farrinholt. This force repulsed the attacks of the enemy, and saved the bridge; and Fitzhugh arriving at this time, Wilson retreated, leaving his dead on the field.*

Retreating rapidly, Wilson reached Sappony Church, on the afternoon of the 28th. Here he found Hampton's cavalry which had been thrown out to meet him. A severe engagement ensued, in which General Wilson was worsted. He then re-

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 26, 1864.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"SIR: The enemy has been quiet to-day in our front. A dispatch, dated 25th, was received this morning from Capt. Farrinholt, commanding at Staunton River bridge, expressing his confidence in being able to protect it.

"This afternoon General W. H. F. Lee reports that he attacked the enemy near Staunton River bridge, yesterday afternoon, and drove him until dark. He also states that the enemy was signally repulsed at the bridge the same evening, and retreated this morning, leaving about thirty of his dead on the field.

Very respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA.
June 23, 1864.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

"SIR: The enemy has been engaged to-day apparently in strengthening his lines in front of Petersburg, advancing them at some points. His cavalry, after being repulsed at Staunton River bridge, on the afternoon of the 26th, retired in the direction of Christiansville, where they encamped that night. The next morning they continued their march towards Lawrenceville, by way of Burntville, and a part of them encamped last night about eight miles northwest of the former place. They appeared to be making their way back to the main body of the army.

Very respectfully, &c.,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

tired to Reams' Station, which was in possession of the Federal army. To his surprise, however, he was attacked by Mahone's infantry upon reaching the railroad, while Hampton and Fitzhugh Lee closed in upon him from behind. Defeated in this encounter, with the loss of his trains and artillery, he fled southward, abandoning everything that could impede his movements.* He succeeded in crossing the Nottoway River, and escaped into the Union lines. The Federal loss in this raid was very great, and the expedition accomplished literally nothing in comparison with what it suffered.†

The month of June closed with both armies facing each other at Petersburg, General Grant constantly watching for an opportunity to extend his left across the Weldon Railroad.

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
JUNE 29th, 1864—8 30, P. M.

"HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR:

"Sir — General Hampton reports that he attacked the enemy's cavalry, yesterday afternoon on their return from Staunton river bridge, this side of Sappony church, and drove them beyond that point. The fight continued during the night, and at daylight this morning he turned their left and routed them. When they reached Reams' Station they were confronted by a portion of Mahone's division, who attacked them in front, while their left flank was turned by General Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry. The enemy was completely routed, and several pieces of artillery, with a number of prisoners, wagons, ambulances, etc., captured. The cavalry are in pursuit.

R. E. LEE."

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
JULY 1, 1864.

"HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General Beauregard reports a feeble demonstration made by the enemy on a portion of General Johnson's lines about five P. M., yesterday. His skirmishers, supported by two lines of troops, drove in our line of skirmishers, which was established at dark.

"In the various conflicts with the enemy's cavalry in their late expedition against the railroads, besides their killed and wounded left on the field, one thousand prisoners, thirteen pieces of artillery, thirty wagons and ambulances, many small arms, horses, ordnance stores, and several hundred negroes, taken from the plantations on their route, were captured.

R. E. LEE, *General*."

North of the James very little transpired worthy of note, the efforts of both armies being concentrated south of the river. General Butler, towards the close of the month, threw a part of his command to the north bank, and established a force at Deep Bottom. The Federal cavalry, on the 24th of June, attempted to occupy Nance's Shop, but were driven from it by General Hampton.*

III.

BURNSIDE'S MINE.

The months of June and July were spent by the Confederate army in strengthening its position. So powerful were the works constructed for the defence of Petersburg, that by the 1st of July the Federal engineers declared them impregnable to assault.† The line consisted of a "chain of redans, connected by infantry parapets of a powerful profile, while the approaches were completely obstructed by abatis, stakes, and entanglements. Beginning at the south bank of the Appomat-

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 25, 1864, 9 P. M.

"HONORABLE SECRETARY OF WAR:

"SIR: Our entire loss yesterday morning was ninety-seven killed and wounded, and two hundred and nine missing. Nothing of moment has occurred to-day on the lines in front of Bermuda Hundreds and around Petersburg. General Hampton reports that the enemy's cavalry advanced yesterday to Nance's Shop and intrenched themselves there. He attacked them and drove them from their works, pursuing them until 9 P. M. to within two miles of Charles City Court House. They left their dead and wounded on the field and along the route. Great credit is due to General Hampton and his command for their handsome success.

Very respectfully,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 516.

tox, it enveloped Petersburg on the east and south, stretching westward beyond the furthest reach of the left flank of the Union army. A continuation of the same system to the north side of the Appomattox, protected the city and the Petersburg and Richmond Railroad against attack from the direction of the front held by Butler's force at Bermuda Hundreds. The defence of Richmond was provided for by its own chain of fortifications."*

As the writer I have just quoted, remarks, Petersburg was not besieged in the strict sense of the term, for its communications were all open. It was in the condition of the city of Sebastopol when beleagured by the Allies. The task assigned to General Lee was both difficult and dangerous. He had a line forty miles in length to guard, with an army of less than fifty thousand men, against a powerful and well equipped enemy, supplied with every means of prosecuting the so-called siege. The manner in which this task was performed will always constitute one of General Lee's chief claims to the high rank he holds in the military world.

Constant skirmishing occurred between the two armies, neither party neglecting to strike whenever and wherever a fair opportunity presented itself.

General Grant also busied himself in strengthening his line, so that he might be able to hold it with a small part of his army, and thus leave the rest of his troops free for operations elsewhere.

Although the engineers had pronounced against an assault upon the Confederate works, it was resolved to make one more effort of this nature, and in order to render it effective, General Grant concluded to adopt a plan proposed by General Burnside.

The intrenchments of the 9th corps were within one hundred

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac — p. 515.

and fifty yards of the Confederate works, which at this point formed an angle guarded by a fort. This fort was situated in a reëntrant angle, and was secured against capture by the enemy by being exposed to an enfilading and reverse fire on both sides, right and left. Just behind it, however, was an important ridge that commanded the city and a considerable portion of the Southern line. Burnside proposed to excavate a mine under this fort, and by exploding it, make a breach in the Confederate line, through which a powerful storming party should enter, and take possession of the works. If a successful lodgement could be made, it would result in the capture of the city and the defeat of Lee's army. The work was pushed forward, and by the 25th of July the mine was in readiness. Twelve thousand pounds of powder were placed in the mine on the 27th, and everything was prepared for the grand assault, which was appointed for the 30th of July.

In order to cause General Lee to weaken his force at Petersburg, General Grant on the 26th sent Hancock's corps, and two divisions of Sheridan's cavalry, to Deep Bottom on the James, to threaten Richmond from that quarter. Hancock's instructions were to march at once upon Chafin's Bluff, and try to secure the bridges by which Lee maintained his communications between the two banks of the river.* While Hancock was trying to gain the bridges, Sheridan was to move with his cavalry towards the Virginia Central Railroad, and make a dash upon the city from that direction. The expedition landed at Deep Bottom on the night of the 26th, and the utmost secrecy was maintained respecting the movement, as it was designed to make it a surprise.

* General Grant must have been misinformed as to the location of these bridges. The lowest, which was a permanent structure (draw-bridge), was above Drewry's Bluff, and the others from that point to within four miles of Richmond.

It was not possible to surprise the Confederates at this point, as Butler's sending Foster's command to Deep Bottom had caused General Lee to station a force on the north side to watch the Federal movements, and this force was charged to maintain the utmost vigilance in guarding against any sudden attack by the enemy. General Hancock, finding that a surprise was not to be effected, resolved to force the Confederates from their position. He ordered General Foster to attack the works in front, while he, with his own corps, moved around the Southern right flank. The attack was made on the morning of the 27th, and the Confederates fell back to a second line behind Bailey's Creek, where they covered all the approaches to Chafin's Bluff.* Hancock endeavored to flank this line also, but night came on before he could carry out his purpose.

This movement induced General Lee to send four out of his eight divisions to the north side of the James. On the morning of the 28th he attacked Sheridan's cavalry which had been thrown out in advance, and drove it back to Hancock's main line, which he proceeded to press heavily.

Finding it impossible to accomplish anything on the north side, and judging from the pressure upon Hancock, that a considerable force had been withdrawn from Petersburg, General Grant ordered Hancock to withdraw secretly on the night of the 29th, and return to the lines of Petersburg in order to take part in the attack on the 30th. This was accomplished successfully.

The preparations for the explosion of the mine were completed on the 28th, and after Hancock's return to the South Side, all was in readiness. The mine was to be fired at four o'clock on the morning of the 30th, and before the Confederates could recover from the confusion into which they would

* Had General Hancock reached Chafin's Bluff, he could not have captured it. The position was stronger than that on Bailey's Creek.

be thrown, Burnside's corps was to charge through the breach, and carry the works, while the rest of the army was to be held in readiness to follow up any advantage gained.

General Grant's movements on the north side accomplished more than he intended. They aroused the suspicions of General Lee, and these suspicions were confirmed by the threatening demonstrations which occurred along Butler's line on the night of the 29th. At two o'clock on the morning of the 30th, General Lee informed his commanders that the enemy intended an attack at some point of the line, that he believed the movements at Bermuda Hundreds to be a feint, and enjoined the strictest watchfulness upon all. In consequence of this warning, the army was prepared for instant action, though no one had any idea of the real nature of Grant's design.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 30th of July, the enemy exploded the mine. The fort was literally blown in the air, and a breach was made in the Southern line thirty or forty yards wide. The fort was held by Pegram's battery of four guns, and three regiments of South Carolina infantry. The explosion overturned the guns, and killed and wounded several of the artillerists and many of the infantry; the site of the fort was converted into a huge crater one hundred and fifty feet long, sixty-five feet wide, and from twenty-five to thirty feet deep; and the troops in the immediate vicinity were considerably demoralized by the sudden and appalling explosion.

The smoke had not floated away before every gun along the Federal line was opened in a furious cannonade, and at the same time Ledlie's division of Burnside's corps, emerged from the Federal works, dashed across the intervening space, and entered the crater. Had they advanced beyond this they might have carried the line, for the Confederates had not yet recovered from their surprise. To the astonishment of every one, however, they huddled into the crater, and sought shelter there

and behind the breastworks. The divisions of Potter and Wilcox, of the 9th corps, were also advanced, but they, too, crowded into the crater.

Taking advantage of this delay, the Confederates rapidly regained their self possession, and with admirable discipline formed on the right and left of the gap. General Mahone was directed by General A. P. Hill, who fortunately happened to be on the spot, to bring up his division, and drive the enemy back to their own line.

Two hours passed away, and an assault was made and repulsed, and General Burnside, finding that his white troops had accomplished nothing, threw forward his negro division to make the assault. The blacks advanced beyond the crater, but only to receive a withering fire of musketry and artillery which sent them reeling back among the whites in the pit. The Confederate artillery on both sides of the opening, poured a rapid fire into it, doing great execution, and completely demoralizing the 9th corps. Parties of tens and twenties sallied out and tried to creep or run back to their own lines and were generally shot in the attempt to do so. The scene in the pit was horrible. The blacks and whites were huddled together in wild dismay, screaming and shouting, with the Southern shells exploding over their heads and in their midst every moment, doing great execution among them. It was as difficult to retreat as to advance, and, desperate as the situation was, many preferred to remain in the crater, rather than risk the chance of being shot down in the effort to return to their friends.

At nine o'clock, General Mahone was ordered to drive the enemy out of the crater. Making an impetuous attack, he destroyed what little of organization was left to the enemy. They attempted little or no resistance, but, breaking in confusion, rushed back pell-mell to their own works followed by the deadly fire of the Southern infantry and artillery.

The failure of this attack was a source of considerable mortification to the enemy, as they had reasonably expected very great results from it. Strangely enough, the Committee on the Conduct of the War, of the Federal Congress, declared the principal cause of the failure to be, the fact that the attack was led with white instead of negro troops. This is sheer nonsense. The cause of the failure lay simply in the weak and unskilful manner in which the attack was made. It was so weak and devoid of common sense as to be laughable, but for the terrible suffering it brought to the Federal troops engaged.

The enemy lost four thousand men, of whom eight hundred were prisoners, including one general officer, and twelve standards. The Confederate loss was slight, only a few hundred.

IV.

MATTERS NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE JAMES.

After the failure of the mine assault, General Grant seemed to abandon the idea of a direct attack, and spent the autumn and a part of the winter in attempting to extend his left around Petersburg, and in "hammering away" at the Confederate defences north of the James.

Early in August, he resolved to make another effort from the neighborhood of Deep Bottom. He was informed that the Southern force confronting General Foster in that locality did not number more than eight thousand men, and he believed that a sudden attack by a strong column, would carry the works at Chafin's Bluff. Accordingly the 2nd and 10th corps, and Gregg's division of cavalry, all under General Hancock, were embarked on transports at City Point, in order to conceal the

character of the movement, and landed at Deep Bottom on the morning of the 13th of August.

Deep Bottom is about twelve miles from Richmond by land, but about twenty by water. Five miles west of Deep Bottom, and nearer the city, is Chafin's Bluff, just on the river. From Chafin's Bluff, the main line of the defences of the Confederate Capital extended almost due north to the Chickahominy at Garnett's and Mrs. Price's farms. After leaving the river, the line of defence crosses, first, the Osborne road, then the Darbytown road, then, five miles farther north, the Charles City road, then the Williamsburg road and lastly, the New Bridge road. The Osborne road, which may be said to be a continuation of Main street, Richmond, runs southeast from the city, following the course of James River. The New Market road branches off from the Osborne road, two miles below the city, and runs to New Market, a mile and a half north of Deep Bottom. The Williamsburg road leaves the city at Fulton's Hill, a point about three hundred yards north of the exit of the Osborne road, and runs due east from Richmond to Bottom's Bridge, over the Chickahominy, and thence to Williamsburg. Two miles from the city the Darbytown road strikes off to the right from the Williamsburg road, and runs by a southeast direction into the New Market road a mile below Deep Bottom. Two miles farther down the Williamsburg road, the Charles City road also branches off to the right, and, at a point fourteen miles east by south of the city, runs into a cross road known as the Quaker road, which leads from Turkey Bend, on James River, almost due north, across Malvern Hill, and White Oak Swamp Bridge to Bottom's Bridge. Just below New Market is a small stream known as Bailey's Creek, emptying into the James.

About ten o'clock on the morning of the 13th, Hancock advanced towards New Market, seeing nothing of the Confederates until he arrived at Bailey's Creek, the farthest point

reached by him in July. Here he found the Confederates occupying an intrenched line. The day was passed in skirmishing, and towards dusk the enemy effected a lodgement on the Confederate right, and captured four guns, but were forced back from the point they had won.

The next morning, the 14th, the fighting was not resumed, but the day was passed by the enemy in endeavoring to discover the situation of the Confederate left, which was at White's Tavern on the Charles City road. During the day, General Lee, who had been apprised of Hancock's movement, reënforced the command at Deep Bottom.

On the 15th Birney's division was sent by General Hancock to find and turn the Confederate left, but the day passed away with mere skirmishing. On the 16th, Birney attacked the Confederate position on the New Market road. He carried the line at first, but the Confederates, rallying speedily, drove him from it with heavy loss. At the same time the enemy's cavalry were encountered by General Chambliss' brigade on the Charles City road. The Southern cavalry were driven back for a considerable distance, but, rallying, they turned on the enemy, and repulsed them. These encounters occupied the day from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon, when the battle ended with the Confederates in full possession of their line, the enemy having been repulsed at all points.

Failing to carry the Southern line, General Hancock resorted to strategy. During the night of the 16th, he had a fleet of steamers sent from City Point to Deep Bottom, where they remained until four A. M. on the 17th, when they returned to City Point. General Hancock hoped that this would induce the Confederates to think he had abandoned his expedition, and entice them out of their works; but the artifice was unsuccessful.* After several days spent in skirmishing, Hancock re-

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 531.

turned on the 20th to the South Side, having lost fifteen hundred men, and accomplished nothing. The Confederate loss was less than five hundred.

Judging, from the resistance encountered by General Hancock, that General Lee had withdrawn a considerable part of his army from the lines of Petersburg, General Grant on the 18th of August, sent General Warren with the 5th corps to effect a lodgement on the Weldon Railroad.

When General Lee occupied Petersburg he had no hope of being able to hold the Weldon Railroad, for his force was too weak to guard it effectually. He urged the Government to take measures to supply the army by the Danville Railroad alone, as it would be impossible to prevent the enemy from cutting the Weldon Railroad at some point, if they did not destroy the greater part of it. The reply to this warning was an intimation of the desire of the Government that he would hold the Weldon Road as long as possible. He replied that he would do all he could to hold it, but that he had little faith in his ability to do so. In obedience, therefore, to the directions of the Government General Lee prepared to maintain his hold on the Weldon Road as long as possible.

About nine o'clock on the morning of the 18th, the enemy reached Gurley's farm, about four miles southwest of Petersburg, and one mile east of the railroad. Throwing forward a line of skirmishers, they advanced towards the railroad. They soon encountered the pickets of Dearing's cavalry brigade, who disputed their advance stubbornly until about two o'clock in the afternoon, by which time Dearing had been forced back to within two miles of the city. In the afternoon a part of General A. P. Hill's corps fell suddenly upon Warren's left as he attempted to advance. The Federals were driven back for a mile, when the Confederates were withdrawn. The enemy's loss was about one thousand killed, wounded and missing — about three hundred being prisoners.

While this was going on in front of Petersburg, General Warren sent Griffin's division to seize the railroad. Griffin established himself on the road, and at once proceeded to intrench his position.

On the afternoon of the 19th, General Lee sent Heth's and Mahone's divisions of Hill's corps to drive Warren back. These troops, in a vigorous attack, succeeded in forcing the Federals from their advanced position near Petersburg, but did not succeed in dislodging them from the railroad. Warren's loss was heavy, including twenty-five hundred prisoners and one of his brigade commanders — General Hays.

After the close of the fight the Confederates withdrew to their main line, and Warren, throwing forward his troops on the morning of the 20th, occupied the ground they had abandoned. The day passed in comparative quiet, General Lee being engaged in massing troops on his right for the purpose of dislodging the enemy, who had fortified their position at Reams' Station on the railroad.

On the morning of the 21st, the Confederates opened with their artillery upon Warren's position, and after an hour's cannonade Heth's division made a spirited attack on the enemy in front, while Mahone moved out to turn their left. After a short, sharp fight the attack in front was repulsed, and Mahone was driven back with a loss of five hundred prisoners, besides his killed and wounded.

These engagements cost the Federals four thousand four hundred and fifty-five men killed, wounded and captured, but they retained their hold on the railroad, all the efforts of the Confederates to dislodge them being failures.

In order to make sure of the position gained by his left, General Grant sent General Hancock's corps, which had just returned from Deep Bottom, to Warren's assistance. General Hancock's instructions were to break up the railroad as far south

as Rowanty Creek, eight miles from Reams' Station. Upon reaching the road late in the afternoon of the 21st, he at once set to work to destroy it, and the next three days were spent in this way. By the afternoon of the 24th he had destroyed the track to a point three miles south of Reams' Station. Here he withdrew his infantry into his intrenchments at Reams', and sent a part of his corps to continue the work of destruction. Just as this force was about to move off, on the 25th of August, Hancock was attacked by the Confederates.

General Lee had resolved to make a last effort for the possession of the railroad, and on the 24th, sent Hill's corps to drive the enemy from it. Hill moved out from Petersburg on the 24th, and encamped for the night near Armstrong's Mills about eight miles south of the city. Early the next morning, the 25th, he resumed his march, and halted at Monk's Neck Bridge, about three miles from Reams' Station, while the cavalry, under General Hampton, were thrown out to reconnoitre. Hampton encountered the Federal cavalry about eleven o'clock, four miles below Reams' Station, and, attacking them, pressed them back steadily to Malone's Station.

As soon as General Hill heard of this, he ordered General Hampton to take position on his left to coöperate with him in an attack on the enemy's works west of the railroad at Reams' Station.

Hill opened his attack at two o'clock, making a charge upon the Federal intrenchments. The assault was repulsed. Resolving, in spite of this failure, to carry the works, General Hill quickly brought up his artillery, and opened a heavy fire, on the Federal line, taking it in reverse, and doing considerable execution. Heth's division, and Lane's brigade of Wilcox's division, were advanced under the cover of Pegram's guns, until directly in front of the works, when a rush was made which resulted in the capture of the whole line — not, however, before Hancock's

men had been driven off in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle in the works, in which clubbed muskets and the bayonet were used freely.

On the left Hampton's cavalry drove the Federals from their intrenchments and held them.

At nightfall the enemy withdrew from the railroad towards their main line, and soon afterwards the Confederates returned to Petersburg.

The Confederate loss was seven hundred and twenty killed, wounded and missing. The enemy lost two thousand prisoners, twelve stands of colors, nine pieces of artillery, ten caissons, and three thousand one hundred stand of small arms.*

Constant skirmishing occurred between the two armies, and many sharp encounters took place between the hostile cavalry forces. The most brilliant of all these affairs was the dash made by General Hampton into the Federal lines in September.

It was known that General Grant had a large drove of cattle grazing in Prince George County. This information was gained by General Hampton from a letter to General Grant which he intercepted. The letter stated that the cattle had been sent to the neighborhood of Sycamore Church, and that

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
August 26, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General A. P. Hill attacked the enemy in his intrenchments, at Reams' Station, yesterday evening, and at the second assault carried his entire line. Cooke's and McRae's North Carolina brigades, under General Heth, and Lane's North Carolina brigade, of Wilcox's division, under General Connor, with Pegram's artillery, composed the assaulting column. One line of breastworks was carried by the cavalry, under General Hampton, with great gallantry, who contributed largely to the success of the day. Seven stands of colors, two thousand prisoners and nine pieces of artillery are in our possession. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded is reported to be heavy; ours relatively small. Our profound gratitude is due to the Giver of all victory, and our thanks to the brave men and officers engaged.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

they were in splendid condition. Hampton at once determined to secure the beeves, which were much needed by the Army of Northern Virginia.

Leaving Petersburg on the 14th of September, he bivouacked that night at Duval's Mill, in Sussex County, eighteen miles from Petersburg. The next day he resumed his march, and halted for the night in the vicinity of Sycamore Church, which was held by a force of the enemy, posted in intrenchments. At daylight on the morning of the 16th, he surprised and stormed this position, capturing the works and camp of the enemy and three hundred prisoners.

The cattle, about twenty-five hundred in number, were secured, and, the object of the expedition being accomplished, Hampton set off on his return. Rosser's and Dearing's brigades were in the advance, and Fitzhugh Lee brought up the rear, the captured cattle marching between. The beeves stretched out over a line of four miles, but were skilfully handled. Everything went well until the column reached Belsches' Mill, on the Jerusalem plank road, about eighteen miles from Petersburg. Here two Federal cavalry divisions, under General Wilson, were drawn up to resist the progress of the Confederates.

Hampton promptly attacked them, drove them back from the road, and succeeded in reaching Petersburg in safety, with all his captures, at six o'clock on the morning of the 17th, having lost only fifty men during the expedition.*

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
September 17, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"At daylight yesterday the enemy's skirmish line west of the Jerusalem plank road was driven back upon his intrenchments along their whole extent. Ninety prisoners were taken by us in the operation. At the same hour, General Hampton attacked the enemy's position north of the Norfolk Railroad, near Sycamore Church, and captured about three hundred prisoners, some arms and wagons, a large number of horses, and twenty-five hundred cattle. General Gregg attacked General Hampton on his return in the afternoon at Belsches' Mill, on the Jerusalem plank road, but was repulsed and

The action at Reams' Station, on the 25th of August, though it resulted in the defeat of Hancock's corps, did not cause General Warren to relinquish his hold on the Weldon Railroad, and in order to secure this acquisition the Federals united their main line with Warren's position by a chain of heavy works, stretching from the railroad to the old left of the army on the Jerusalem plank road.

Towards the end of September General Grant determined to make another effort against the Confederate works north of the James, and, in order to prevent Lee from reënforcing that side, sent General Warren with two divisions of the 5th corps, two of the 9th, and Gregg's division of cavalry, to operate on the Confederate right towards Poplar Spring Church and Peebles' Farm, southwest of Petersburg. Warren moved on the 30th of September, and in the afternoon carried a Confederate outwork on Peebles' Farm, and one on the Squirrel Level road. He then attempted to move the two divisions of the 9th corps, under General Parke, towards the Boydton plank road, but this force was driven back by Heth's division of A. P. Hill's corps.*

The next day, October 1st, was spent by the enemy in heavy skirmishing. The Confederate cavalry gained some advantage

driven back. Everything was brought off safely. Our entire loss does not exceed fifty men.

R. E. LEE."

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 1, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR.

"Yesterday evening General Heth attacked the enemy's infantry, who had broken through a portion of the line held by our artillery on Squirrel Level road, and drove them back. General Hill reports that they were severely punished, and four hundred prisoners captured. General Hampton, operating on General Heth's right, also drove the enemy, capturing two stands of colors, and about five hundred prisoners, including five colonels and thirteen other officers.

R. E. LEE."

in the morning, but were repulsed in the afternoon. On the 2d of October Warren advanced his whole command, but found that the Confederates had retired to their main line. He then proceeded to fortify the position he had gained, and to connect it with the left of the Federal works. His loss in the operation was twenty-five hundred men.

Under the cover of this movement General Butler threw the corps of Ord and Birney across to Deep Bottom. The next day — the 29th — he advanced towards the outer line, and captured Fort Harrison, an important work, taking with it fifteen pieces of artillery, and about three hundred prisoners. The force holding the work was very small, and made but a weak resistance.

The capture of Fort Harrison seriously endangered the main line of the Confederates for the time. The enemy advanced beyond the fort against this position, and during the remainder of the day the Confederates had hard work to hold their ground. They were so weak that the men present, in order to cover the line had to be posted five feet apart, yet this thin line held the works until dark.*

General Feld whose division lay immediately in front of Fort Harrison after its capture, was anxious to move out at once, and attempt its recapture before the enemy could strengthen it; but it was agreed to defer the assault until the next afternoon — September 30th — when it was made and repulsed.†

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
September 29, 1864.

"HON. J. A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General Gregg reports that he repulsed several attacks of the enemy made against the intermediate line of defences, capturing many prisoners. The enemy still hold Battery Harrison on the exterior line. Our loss is very small.
R. E. LEE."

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
September, 30, 1864.

"HON. J. A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"An attempt was made this afternoon to retake Battery Harrison, which, though partially successful, failed.
R. E. LEE."

The enemy continued to hold the line they had gained with a strong force. Fort Harrison was strengthened, and their position fortified to the James River. Many efforts were made to break through the Confederate works at Chafin's Bluff, and between that point and the Williamsburg Road, all of which failed. The most important of these movements took place on the 13th of October. Early in the morning the Federals moved a heavy column between the Charles City and Darbytown roads, and in repeated attacks, during the day, endeavored to carry the Southern works. Their assaults were all repulsed, and night put an end to the fighting.*

On the 27th of October the enemy made another effort to turn the Confederate left, but were defeated.†

The capture of Fort Harrison enabled General Butler to prosecute with greater safety the work on his canal at Dutch Gap. As this undertaking acquired considerable notoriety at the time, it may not be out of place to describe it briefly.

Dutch Gap is the name applied to a neck of land, very long and narrow, around which the James River makes a considerable bend, about eighteen miles below Richmond. It lies

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October, 13, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"At seven o'clock this morning the enemy endeavored to advance between the Darbytown and Charles City roads, but was repulsed in every attempt. The most strenuous effort was made about four P. M., after which he withdrew, leaving many dead. Our loss very slight.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 27, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"The movement of the enemy against our left to-day was repulsed. Two attacks upon our lines were made — one between the Henrico Poorhouse and Charles City road, the other on the Williamsburg road. Several hundred prisoners and four stands of colors were captured. Our loss is very slight.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

immediately opposite Howlett's Farm on the south side, and was commanded during the war by the Confederate battery at the latter place. In order to move the Federal gunboats around this battery, General Butler in August 1864, commenced the construction of a canal across Dutch Gap. The work was prosecuted with vigor, and finished early in 1865, but the canal could never be used.

During the early part of its construction, General Butler, was informed that the Confederates had set negro prisoners of war to work on their fortifications, at points where they were exposed to the Federal fire, and, as a measure of retaliation, he at once set a number of Confederates to work on the Dutch Gap Canal, which was constantly under fire from the Confederate guns at Howlett's Farm, and informed the Confederate Authorities of his act. General Lee was directed by the War Department to inform General Grant that Butler's charges were unfounded, and that retaliation on the part of the Federals was not warranted by the facts of the case. General Grant immediately directed that the Confederates at Dutch Gap should be removed to a place of safety, which was done.

The following correspondence was held by the two commanders in settling this matter.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 19, 1864.

"LIEUTENANT GENERAL U. S. GRANT, *Commanding United States Armies* :

"GENERAL : In accordance with instructions from the Honorable Secretary of War of the Confederate States, I have the honor to call your attention to the subject of two communications recently addressed by Major-General B. F. Butler, an officer under your command, to the Hon. Robert Ould, Commissioner for the exchange of prisoners.

"For the better understanding of the matter, I enclose copies of the communications.

“ You will perceive by one of them that the writer has placed a number of officers and men belonging to the Confederate service, prisoners of war captured by the United States forces, at labor in the canal at Dutch Gap, in retaliation, as is alleged, for a like number of Federal colored soldiers, prisoners of war in our hands, who are said to have been put to work on our fortifications.

“ The evidence of this fact is found in the affidavits of two deserters from our service.

“ The other letter refers to a copy of a notice issued by a Confederate officer commanding a camp near Richmond, calling upon the owners to come forward and establish their claims to certain negroes in the custody of that officer.

“ The writer of the letter proceeds to state that some of the negroes mentioned in the notice are believed to be soldiers of the United States army captured in arms; and, upon that belief, he has ordered to such manual labor as he deems most fitting to meet the exigency an equivalent number of prisoners of war held by the United States, and announces that he will continue to order to labor captives in war to a number equal to that of all the United States soldiers who he has reason to believe are held to service or labor by the Confederate forces, until he shall be notified that the alleged practice on the part of the Confederate authorities has ceased.

“ Before stating the facts with reference to the particular negroes alluded to, I beg to explain the policy pursued by the Confederate Government towards this class of persons, when captured by its forces.

“ All negroes in the military or naval service of the United States, taken by us, who are not identified as the property of citizens or residents of any of the Confederate States, are regarded as prisoners of war, being held to be proper subjects of exchange, as I recently had the honor to inform you.

“No labor is exacted from such prisoners by the Confederate authorities.

“Negroes who owe service or labor to citizens or residents of the Confederate States, and who, through compulsion, persuasion, or of their own accord, leave their owners, and are placed in the military or naval service of the United States, occupy a different position.

“The right to the service or labor of negro slaves, in the Confederate States, is the same now as when those States were members of the Federal Union.

“The constitutional relations and obligations of the Confederate Government to the owners of this species of property, are the same as those so frequently and so long recognized as appertaining to the Government of the United States, with reference to the same class of persons, by virtue of its organic law.

“From the earliest period of the independence of the American States, it has been held that one of the duties incumbent upon the several common governments under which they have, from time to time, been associated, was the return to their lawful owners, of slaves recaptured from the public enemy. It has been uniformly held that the capture or abduction of a slave does not impair the right of the owner to such slave, but that the right attaches to him immediately upon recapture.

“Such was the practice of the American States during their struggle for independence. The Government under which they were then associated, restored to the owners slaves abducted by the British forces and subsequently recaptured by the American armies.

“In the war of 1812, with Great Britain, the course pursued by the United States Government was the same, and it recognized the right of the owner to slaves recaptured from the enemy. Both the Continental and the United States Governments, in fact, denied that the abduction of slaves was a bel-

ligerent right, and the latter power insisted upon and ultimately secured by treaty, pecuniary indemnity from the British Government for slaves taken by its forces during the war of 1812.

“ And it is supposed that if a negro belonging to a citizen of a State in which slavery is recognized, and which is regarded as one of the United States, were to escape into the Confederate States, or be captured or abducted by their armies, the legal right of the owner to reclaim him would be as clear now as in 1812, the Constitution of the United States being unchanged in this particular, and that instrument having been interpreted in the judicial decisions, legislative and diplomatic acts and correspondence of the United States, as imposing upon that Government the duty of protecting, in all cases coming within the scope of its authority, the owners of slaves as well as of any other kind of property recognized as such by the several States.

“ The Confederate Government, bound by the same constitutional obligations, considers, as that of the United States did, that the capture or abduction of a negro slave does not preclude the lawful owner from reclaiming him when captured; and I am instructed to say that all such slaves when properly identified as belonging to citizens of any of the Confederate States, or to persons enjoying the protection of their laws, will be restored, like other recaptured private property, to those entitled to them.

“ Having endeavored to explain the general policy of the Confederate Government with regard to this subject, I beg leave to state the facts concerning the particular transactions referred to in the enclosed communications.

“ The negroes recently captured by our forces were sent to Richmond with other Federal prisoners. After their arrival it was discovered that a number of them were slaves belonging to citizens or residents of some of the Confederate States, and of this class fifty-nine, as I learn, were sent, with other negroes,

to work on the fortifications around Richmond until their owners should appear and claim them. As soon as I was informed of the fact, less than two days afterwards, not wishing to employ them here, I ordered them to be sent to the interior.

“By a misapprehension of the engineer officer in charge, they were transferred to our lines south of James River, but when apprised of his error I repeated the order for their removal. If any negroes were included among this number who were not identified as the slaves of citizens or residents of some of the Confederate States, they were so included without the knowledge or authority of the War Department, as already explained, and the mistake, when discovered, would have been corrected.

“It only remains for me to say, that negroes employed upon our fortifications are not allowed to be placed where they will be exposed to fire, and there is no foundation for any statement to the contrary.

“The author of the communications referred to has considered himself justified (by the report of two deserters who do not allege that the negroes in question were exposed to any danger,) in placing our prisoners at labor in the canal at Dutch Gap, under the fire of our batteries.

“In view of the explanation of the practice of the Confederate Government above given, and of the statement of facts I have made, I have now, in accordance with my instructions, respectfully to inquire whether the course pursued towards our prisoners, as set forth in the accompanying letters, has your sanction, and whether it will be maintained?

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. E. LEE, *General.*”

"HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

October 20, 1864

"GENERAL R. E. LEE, *C. S. A. Commanding Army of Northern Virginia* :

"GENERAL: Understanding, from your letter of the 19th, that the colored prisoners who were employed at work in the trenches near Fort Gilmer have been withdrawn, I have directed the withdrawal of the Confederate prisoners employed in the Dutch Gap Canal. I shall always regret the necessity for retaliating for wrongs done our soldiers, but regard it my duty to protect all persons received into the army of the United States, regardless of color or nationality. When acknowledged soldiers of the Government are captured, they must be treated as prisoners of war, or such treatment as they receive will be inflicted upon an equal number of prisoners held by us.

"I have nothing to do with the discussion of the slavery question, therefore decline answering the arguments adduced to show the right to return to former owners such negroes as are captured from our army. In answer to the question at the conclusion of your letter, I have to state that all prisoners of war falling into my hands shall receive the kindest possible treatment consistent with securing them, unless I have good authority for believing any number of our men are being treated otherwise. Then, painful as it may be to me, I shall inflict like treatment on an equal number of Confederate prisoners.

"Hoping that it may never become my duty to order retaliation upon any man held as a prisoner of war,

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*"

The winter was now rapidly approaching, and as this is, in Eastern Virginia, a season when it is extremely difficult if not impossible to conduct military operations, General Grant re-

solved to make one more effort to turn Lee's right before going into winter quarters. This time he designed reaching the South Side Railroad and destroying it.

Accordingly his army was put in light marching order, and everything prepared for a movement of more than ordinary magnitude. Only enough men to hold the line in front of Petersburg were left in it, and the remainder of the army was provided with five days' rations, and stripped of its superfluous baggage. Nothing was left undone that could in the least contribute to the success of the movement, which, if successful, would result in the forced evacuation of Richmond and Petersburg by General Lee.

At daylight on the 27th of October, the Federal army began its march towards Hatcher's Run, where the right of the Southern line rested. General Grant's plan was for the 9th corps, supported by the 5th, to make a direct attack in front, while Hancock, with the 2nd corps, should cross Hatcher's Run above the Confederate right, and, by a detour, gain the Boydton plank road, and seize the South Side Railroad.

Upon reaching the Boydton road, General Grant found it protected by the Confederates, who occupied strong earthworks extending some distance below the point where the road crosses Hatcher's Run. An attack was made on this position by the 5th and 9th corps, and repulsed. Finding it impossible to carry the works by a direct assault, the 5th corps was sent to coöperate with Hancock in turning them.

General Grant had mistaken the location of the Confederate right, and when Hancock reached the point where the intrenchments were supposed to terminate, he found that they extended still farther to the right, and were of such a formidable nature that it was useless to attempt to carry them.

Meanwhile General Lee had determined to assume the offensive, and General A. P. Hill was ordered to attack the enemy.

The presence of the 5th corps was not known to either General Hancock or General Lee, and General Warren was equally ignorant of the whereabouts of either friends or foes, the thickly wooded country having completely bewildered him in his movement to Hancock's assistance. General Lee at first intended to attack Hancock's left, but finding that his other flank offered more immediate advantage ordered General Hill to assail it.

Hill promptly threw forward Heth's command, which crossed Hatcher's Run between Hancock's right and Warren's left, and made a sharp attack with Mahone's division in front, and Hampton's cavalry in the rear. Mahone drove Hancock's right back for a mile, and captured four hundred prisoners, six pieces of artillery, and three standards. He was unable to bring off the guns, as he could not get them across the Run. Hampton, at the same time struck the enemy's rear, and aided greatly in the success of Mahone's attack.

Hancock brought up his remaining divisions and endeavored to drive Mahone from the Boydton road, and regain the position lost by his right. Three lines of battle were broken by the Confederates, and when night came Mahone still held his ground, covering the Boydton road and the South Side Railroad.

Thus far the movement of General Grant had failed. He was convinced by this failure that the Confederate position on the Boydton road was too strong to be successfully assaulted, and being unwilling to keep his army in such an exposed situation, he abandoned the movement on the night of the 27th, and returned to his old position before Petersburg. The Federal loss in this expedition was about two thousand.*

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 28, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General A. P. Hill reports that the attack of General Heth upon the enemy upon the Boydton plank-road, mentioned in my dispatch last evening, was made by three brigades, under General Mahone in front and General Hampton

Grant's withdrawal was a wise measure, for General Lee had massed a strong column of fifteen thousand infantry, and Hampton's cavalry, opposite Hancock's position during the night, with which he meant to crush the 2d corps at daylight, on the 28th. Finding the next morning that the enemy had retreated, General Lee sent Hampton to harass them in their march, which service was successfully performed.*

After this defeat the Federal army settled down into the quiet monotony of winter quarters, and its example was followed by the Confederates, hostilities being confined to outpost and picket fighting.

Early in February, active operations were resumed by General Grant, in another attempt to turn the Confederate right. The expedition was confided to the 2nd and 5th corps, and Gregg's cavalry division. The 2d corps was to engage the Confederates in front, while the 5th turned their right flank. In

in the rear. Mahone captured four hundred prisoners, three stands of colors and six pieces of artillery. The latter could not be brought off, the enemy having possession of the bridge.

"In the attack subsequently made by the enemy, General Mahone broke three lines of battle, and during the night the enemy retired from the Boydton plank-road, leaving his wounded and more than two hundred and fifty dead on the field.

"About 9 o'clock P. M., a small force assaulted and took possession of our works on the Baxter road, in front of Petersburg, but was soon driven out.

"On the Williamsburg road yesterday, General Field captured upwards of four hundred prisoners and seven stands of colors. The enemy left a number of dead in front of our works and returned to his former position to-day.

R. E. LEE."

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 29, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General Hampton followed the enemy on his withdrawal from Rowanty Creek, driving his rear-guard across, and pursuing the cavalry behind the lines of their infantry. Several hundred prisoners were captured; and the enemy burned some of their caissons and ambulances. Our lines are reestablished.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

order to divert attention from this movement, the enemy bombarded the city and Confederate works furiously for several days, and on the 5th of February, the expedition began its march, and in a few hours reached Hatcher's Run.

A part of the Federal infantry crossed the Vaughan road, and proceeded to Cattail Creek, while Gregg's cavalry moved to Dinwiddie Court House. Encountering the Confederate cavalry at that point, Gregg fell back. In the afternoon, parts of Hill's and Gordon's corps attacked the column of infantry that had moved by the Vaughan road, and had reached the vicinity of Armstrong's Mill on the left bank of Hatcher's Run. Finding the enemy strongly intrenched, they were withdrawn after a slight encounter.

It was reported during the night, that the enemy were recrossing Hatcher's Run, and on the morning of the 6th, Pegram's division moved down the right bank of the stream to reconnoitre. It had not proceeded far before it was attacked by the 5th corps of the Federal army, and, after a severe conflict of several hours, in which General Pegram was killed, was forced back. General Gordon then advanced Evans' division to the support of Pegram's command. Evans drove the enemy before him at first, but was at length forced to retire. Finally, Mahone's division was brought up, and the 5th corps driven back upon the intrenchments of the 2d corps. The Confederates were withdrawn, having lost about one thousand men. The Federal loss was about two thousand men.*

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
February 6, 1865.

"GENERAL S. COOPER:

"The enemy moved in strong force yesterday to Hatcher's Run. Part of his infantry, with Gregg's cavalry, crossed and proceeded on the Vaughan road — the infantry to Cattail Creek, the cavalry to Dinwiddie Court House, when its advance encountered a portion of our cavalry and retreated.

"In the afternoon, parts of Hill's and Gordon's troops demonstrated against the enemy on the left of Hatcher's Run, near Armstrong's Mill. Finding

Though he failed to seize the South Side Railroad, the object of the expedition, General Grant was enabled by this movement to extend his left to Hatcher's Run, and he at once secured it by connecting it with the rest of his line by earthworks.

After the destruction of the Weldon Railroad south of Reams' Station, General Lee continued to use it to a point within a few miles of the Federal position, hauling his supplies from the railroad to Petersburg in wagons. During the winter General Grant made several efforts to break up the railroad still farther south. The principal of these was Warren's expedition in December 1864. Taking with him the 5th corps, a division of the 2nd corps, and Gregg's cavalry, he set out on the 7th of December to break up the railroad twenty-five miles southward. That night he reached the Nottoway River, and destroyed the bridge over it. On the 8th the track was destroyed as far south as the Nottoway.

On the afternoon of the 8th General Hampton made a dash upon the Federal pickets, driving them in upon their main line, and repulsed a party of Gregg's cavalry sent after him. He then recrossed the Nottoway and reached Bellfield about daylight on the morning of the 9th. In the afternoon of that day General Warren arrived in front of Bellfield, and attacked the

him intrenched, they were withdrawn after dark. During the night, the force that had advanced beyond the creek retired to it, and were reported to be recrossing.

"This morning, Pegram's division moved down the right bank of the creek to reconnoitre, when it was vigorously attacked. The battle was obstinately contested several hours, but, General Pegram being killed while bravely encouraging his men, and Colonel Hoffman wounded, some confusion occurred, and the division was pressed back to its original position. Evans' division, ordered by General Gordon to support Pegram's, charged the enemy and forced him back, but was, in turn, compelled to retire. Mahone's division arriving, the enemy was driven rapidly to his defences on Hatcher's Run.

"Our loss is reported to be small; that of the enemy not supposed great.

R. E. LEE."

Confederate position there. He was repulsed, and the bridge over the Meherrin River saved.* Finding the position too strong to be carried by his troops, Warren withdrew on the 12th, and returned to his own lines, having destroyed a considerable extent of the road.†

V.

THE VALLEY CAMPAIGN.

The events which transpired north of the Potomac, and in the Valley of Virginia in the summer and fall of 1864 are so closely connected with the siege of Petersburg that I have concluded to present them to the reader under the same general head.

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
December 10, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"General Hampton, after driving the enemy's cavalry upon his infantry, on the afternoon of the 8th, recrossed the Nottoway and reached Bellfield at daylight yesterday. In the afternoon the enemy attacked the position, but was successfully resisted. This morning the enemy is reported retiring and Hampton following. The bridge over the Meherrin was saved. Our loss, as far as known, is small. The garrison, under Garnett and the reserves, behaved well.

R. E. LEE."

† "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
December 13, 1864.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"The expedition to Bellfield, under General Warren, returned within the enemy's lines yesterday. The two divisions of the 9th corps which went to Warren's relief proceeded no further than Belsches' mill. On meeting the returning column, they turned back.

"On returning from Bellfield, the enemy moved eastwardly to the Jerusalem and Sussex Court House roads. Our troops, consequently, only en-

When General Lee sent General Early to drive Hunter from Lynchburg, he also directed him, if possible, to cross the Potomac, and threaten Washington. The Confederate commander was aware of the fears constantly entertained by the Federal Government for the safety of the Capital, and he reasoned that by making a bold movement against it, President Lincoln and his advisers would become so much alarmed that they would draw off from Grant's army a large force for its defence, and that this would reduce the strength of the Army of the Potomac to an extent sufficient to induce General Grant to abandon the siege of Petersburg. Though the result did not meet all of these expectations, we shall see that the expedition to Maryland, and the subsequent campaign in the Valley, did weaken Grant's army to a considerable extent, and to a proportionate degree lighten the pressure upon the army of General Lee. Indeed it is not going too far to assert that, had General Grant been able to use Sheridan's army at Petersburg or Deep Bottom, General Lee would have been forced to abandon his lines in the autumn of 1864.

The line of retreat adopted by General Hunter after his repulse at Lynchburg, opened the way for Early, who promptly moved down the Valley of Virginia, towards the border. His force consisted in all of about fourteen thousand men,—but they were the troops who had made themselves famous as the corps of Stonewall Jackson. Marching rapidly, Early reached Martinsburg by the 3d of July, driving off the command of General Sigel, which retreated across the Potomac at Shepherds-town. The garrison of Harper's Ferry retired to Maryland

countered their rear guard and pursued no farther than the Nottoway River; and they have returned to camp, bringing a few prisoners. Our loss is very slight. The superintendent of the Petersburg and Weldon railroad reports that about six miles of the railroad has been broken up.

R. E. LEE."

Heights, and Early immediately crossed the Potomac, and, moving through Hagerstown, occupied Frederick City on the 7th. From this point he could move upon either Baltimore or Washington, and to mask his real designs he threatened both places.

The sudden appearance of so considerable a Confederate column north of the Potomac, produced no little dismay at Washington ; which was reasonable enough, when it is considered that the force for the defence of that city, at the time of Early's arrival at Hagerstown, did not amount to more than two thousand men. Fortunately for the Federals, the 19th corps, which had been ordered from New Orleans to join Grant, after the failure of the Red River expedition, had just arrived in transports at Fortress Monroe. This force was at once ordered to Washington, and General Grant at the same time despatched the 6th corps from his own army to the relief of the threatened Capital.

It happened that General Lew Wallace, commanding at Baltimore, as soon as he heard of Early's advance, collected a force of about two thousand men, composed of such troops as he could lay hands on, and advanced towards Frederick to check the Confederates. While on his way he was joined by the advanced division of the 6th corps, under General Ricketts. With this force, General Wallace took position on the left bank of the Monocacy River, at the railroad bridge, to dispute the passage of the stream, and hold Early in check until the troops on their way from the James River could arrive and ensure the safety of Washington.

General Early resolved to attack this force and drive it back, and at once left Frederick for that purpose. On the 8th of July he reached Frederick Junction, forced the passage of the Monocacy, and drove General Wallace from his position, inflicting upon him a loss of a thousand men killed and wounded, and seven hundred prisoners. General Wallace retreated

towards Pennsylvania, leaving the road to Washington open, and Early promptly set out in that direction, sending his cavalry towards Baltimore to cut off the enemy's communications with the North, and thus secure his own rear. The cavalry destroyed a considerable part of the Northern Central Railroad, and burned the railroad bridge over Gunpowder River between Baltimore and Philadelphia.

On the 10th General Early arrived at Rockville, in the vicinity of Washington, and on the next day advanced his lines to the fortifications of the city. He found the works very strong, and too well garrisoned to admit of their being captured by him. His men had straggled to a considerable extent on the march, so that when he reached Washington he had but eight thousand infantry, two thousand cavalry, and forty pieces of artillery. Since his advance began, he had marched five hundred miles, averaging twenty miles each day, and his command was very much broken down. The enemy's force in the works was very strong, and the army of General Hunter was closing in upon his rear. In view of all this, General Early wisely determined not to hazard an attack upon the city. This being his determination, his next care was to bring his army off in safety. After skirmishing for several days before Washington, he recrossed the Potomac at White's Ford, on the 14th of July, and retreated to the neighborhood of Winchester. He carried off with him twenty-five hundred horses and twenty-five hundred beef cattle.

His expedition created the profoundest excitement in the North, and it was generally believed that he would capture Washington. Some writers on both sides have censured General Early for his want of enterprise in not making a dash upon the city as soon as he arrived before it, alleging that it was so weakly garrisoned that it would have fallen before him. General Early himself, however, declared that he found the works

strongly manned by a force too large to be attacked by his own, and he is sustained by the direct testimony of General Grant, who, in referring to the battle of Monocacy Bridge, says, "Although it resulted in a defeat to our arms, yet it detained the enemy, and thereby served to enable General Wright to reach Washington with two divisions of the 6th corps and the advance of the 19th corps, *before him*" (Early).*

When General Early retreated from before Washington, General Wright made an effort at pursuit, but, being repulsed in an engagement with the Confederate rear-guard at Snicker's Ferry, withdrew to Washington.

Being convinced that Early was retreating up the Valley, General Grant ordered the return of the 6th and 19th corps to the lines of Petersburg, that they might be used in a movement against Lee before the return of the troops sent by him into the valley.† While the corps were *en route* for the James, however, General Early again assumed the offensive. He moved down the Valley and sent a raiding party of cavalry, under General McCausland, into Pennsylvania, which, on the 30th of July, burned the town of Chambersburg in retaliation for the outrages of the enemy in Virginia.

This movement showed General Grant that it would be necessary to station something more than a mere corps of observation in the Valley of Virginia, and he directed the 6th and 19th corps to suspend their movement to the James, and return to Washington. From that city they were sent to Harper's Ferry. General Grant now combined the old departments of Washington, the Susquehanna, West Virginia, and the Middle department, into one command, which was styled the Middle Military Division, and assigned to General Hunter. The new commander, having expressed a willingness to be relieved, was

* General Grant's Report, p. 15.

† General Grant's Report, p. 15.

soon afterwards succeeded by Major-General Sheridan, who was transferred from the Army of the Potomac.

General Grant's choice was fortunate. Sheridan was the commander best suited for the task assigned him. An educated soldier, he joined to his theoretical knowledge a clear conception of the necessities and requirements of the campaign which was before him, and an energy and pugnacity that rendered him a dangerous antagonist under any circumstances. He was given an army of forty thousand men, consisting of the 6th and 19th corps, and the infantry and cavalry of the old department of West Virginia. The cavalry under his command numbered ten thousand men, splendidly armed and equipped,—in short, the finest body of horse ever seen in America. Sheridan took command of his army on the 7th of August, but for some time nothing of importance occurred in his department.

Meanwhile General Lee had determined to hold Early's army in the Valley. His chief desire was to induce General Grant to raise the siege of Petersburg, and, as he was too weak to accomplish this by offensive movements on the Appomattox, he determined to use Early's column as a means of gaining his object, and on the 4th of August he sent Kershaw's division of Longstreet's corps, and Fitz Lee's division of cavalry to coöperate with him. General Lee's intentions, as he explained them to his lieutenants, were to send Kershaw and Fitz Lee to the neighborhood of Culpepper Court House. Fitz Lee was to move down towards Alexandria, and reconnoitre the enemy's position in that quarter, and if his information and discoveries as to the disposition and strength of the enemy's forces on the Potomac should warrant such a step, he and Kershaw were to cross the river near Leesburg, while Early was to enter Maryland higher up the stream, and the two columns, acting in concert, were to make a demonstration in the direction of Washington, which, if opportunity offered, was to be con-

verted into a real attack. The cavalry of Fitz Lee and the infantry of Kershaw were both placed under the command of Lieutenant-General Anderson, who commanded Longstreet's corps during the absence of the wounded general. General Lee hoped that, as this fact would be known to General Grant, it would induce the latter to believe that the Confederate army had been weakened by the removal of Longstreet's whole corps, and that the Federal commander would either reduce his own strength to reënforce his troops on the Potomac, or venture to attack the Southern position at Petersburg, — the latter step being particularly desired by General Lee at this time.*

The plan was not to be carried out, events defeating it before it could be fairly entered upon. General Anderson moved promptly to Culpepper Court House, and had just reached it when he received a dispatch from General Early, stating that he (Early) had been forced, by the concentration of a heavy Federal force in the Lower Valley, to fall back to Fisher's Hill, and urging General Anderson to send him reënforcements. Anderson at once set out to Early's assistance, passed the Blue Ridge at Chester Gap, and, on the 15th of August, reached Front Royal. He found that Early was at Strasburg, ten miles distant, and that the road between the two places, which winds along the base of the Massanutten, or Fort Mountain, was held by the enemy, who were also in heavy force in Early's front.

Anderson at once perceived that the position of the enemy offered an excellent opportunity for a combined attack by his own and Early's columns, and in order to arrange the details for this movement, sent General Fitz Lee at daybreak on the 16th, to communicate the plan to General Early. Fitz Lee took with him only one staff officer, and, as the road was in possession of the enemy, they set out on mules, ascended the steep side of the mountain, and descended the opposite side in

* The Lost Cause. By E. A. Pollard. p. 591.

this manner, reached Early's headquarters in safety, arranged the plan of battle, and returned to General Anderson by daylight on the 17th.

The enemy, however, had discovered the presence of General Anderson, and, alarmed for their safety, had commenced to retreat, throwing out their cavalry on the morning of the 16th, and occupying Guard Hill, on the north side of the Shenandoah, opposite Front Royal, to cover their withdrawal. Anderson feared that the force on Guard Hill would be increased and the position fortified, and, in the afternoon of the 16th, he sent a brigade of cavalry and one of infantry to drive the enemy from it, and the hill was secured after a sharp engagement. The retreat of the Federals being now discovered, Anderson, on the morning of the 17th, advanced from Front Royal in pursuit, and at the same time Early moved out from Strasburg. The two Confederate columns were united before Winchester, and the Federals were driven through the town with the loss of one gun and a number of prisoners. The pursuit was continued the next day, and the enemy withdrew to Maryland Heights and Harper's Ferry.

Under an energetic and skilful commander, the Confederate army in the Valley might have accomplished highly beneficial results; but, unfortunately, a state of affairs arose which effectually destroyed every prospect of success. It seems that Anderson and Early had both been made lieutenant-generals on the same day, thus making them by their last commissions of equal rank. As major-generals, however, Anderson was the senior officer, and therefore justly Early's superior in this case. Being in Early's department he was unwilling to take command of the whole army, and as Early, by reason of being the junior officer, could not assume it, the army was in reality left without a head, and the golden opportunity was wasted. The chance for pressing Sheridan back over the Potomac, and compelling

Grant to reënforce him to a still greater degree was suffered to pass by unimproved, and for nearly a month matters went on in this way. At last, General Lee, seeing that his plan of operations had been suffered to remain neglected, ordered General Anderson to return with Kershaw's division to Culpepper Court House, where he would be in a position to move to the assistance of either the army at Petersburg and Richmond or that in the Valley. On the 15th of September Kershaw set out for Culpepper.

Early was now in the vicinity of Winchester, to which point he had moved back for the purpose of supplying his army more easily. Sheridan was between Charlestown and Berryville, with his advance lying around the latter town, and the pickets of the hostile forces were within a few miles of each other. Early's force, after Anderson's withdrawal, numbered eight thousand five hundred infantry, less than three thousand cavalry and about thirty-six pieces of artillery—in all about one third as many men as followed Sheridan. In cavalry especially were the Confederates unequal to the task before them. Opposed to the ten thousand splendidly armed horsemen of Torbert and Wilson, Early had but two skeleton divisions under Fitz Lee and Lomax. The horses had been fed on hay—and very little of that—for some time, and were quite weak, and the men were in a wretched state from the lack of discipline which prevailed. They were armed almost exclusively with Enfield rifles or muskets, scarcely any of them having either pistols or sabres.

The task assigned to General Early was almost similar to that so brilliantly performed by General Jackson in the spring and early summer of 1862. He was to prevent the whole strength of the enemy from being concentrated against General Lee, to gather in the harvests of the Shenandoah Valley, and protect the Central Railroad. He was in the same region which Jackson had made glorious, and had under him many of the men of

the Old Valley Army. But the great master was no longer at the head of his veterans, his ablest successor was kept at Richmond by physical sufferings, and his mantle had not fallen upon General Early.

Still General Early was a good soldier. As a corps commander he had proved himself an able officer, and had won a high reputation by his stubborn courage and hard fighting. He was not competent to an independent command. He lacked the genius to form great conceptions, and the ability to execute them as the emergency required. He was a brave, hard-working, pains-taking man, and thoroughly devoted to the cause in which he was engaged. He was most cruelly and wickedly slandered when his reverses befell him. He was charged with drunkenness, among other things, and this charge was bandied about the country to such an extent that "Early and his apple-jack" became a byword. A Committee of the Confederate Congress investigated this charge, and, failing to discover any evidence against him, acquitted him of it. At first General Early was very popular with his troops, and his eccentricities made him a hero in their eyes. A newspaper correspondent, writing at the time, thus speaks of him :

"Old Jubal Early, or as General Lee calls him, his bad old man, has won a name during his sojourn in the Valley of Virginia of which he is well worthy. Did you ever see him? If not, you have missed one of the greatest curiosities of the war. He is a man of considerable corporosity, with a full face, which has the appearance of the full moon when it is at its height in redness. He is about six feet high, and of immense structure. His voice sounds like a cracked Chinese fiddle, and comes from his mouth somewhat in the style of a hardshell Baptist, with a long drawl, accompanied with an interpolation of oaths. In the winter his head is encased in a net striped woollen skull-cap, drawn down over his ears, while his body is contained within

the embraces of a Virginia cloth overcoat, striking his heels. His legs are covered by leggins of the same material, wrapped from the feet upwards as high as the knees with white tape. He is as brave as he is homely, and as homely as any man you ever saw, except Parson Brownlow, who is said to rival his Satanic Majesty in his personal appearance. There are many anecdotes related of old Jubal, but I cannot at present call to memory but one. During the battles in the Wilderness, on one occasion a regiment from South Carolina was ordered to charge the enemy. For some reason they faltered. Old Jubal hearing of it, rode up to the head of the column, and in that peculiar tone for which he is noted, cried out at the top of his voice, 'Boys you got us into this d—d scrape, and you shall help us out. Charge!' The regiment rushed upon the foe, driving him from every position."

After Kershaw left him, Early disposed his army in the following order: Ramseur's division of infantry, and Wickham's division of cavalry (Fitz Lee having been placed in command of all the cavalry) were posted at Winchester. Wharton's division of infantry, and Lomax's division of cavalry were at Stephenson's depot on the railroad, about five miles from Winchester. Rodes' and Gordon's divisions, under Early's immediate command, were marched to Martinsburg to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Thus the army was scattered over twenty-two miles of country, and the separated portions were so weak that it would require but little effort on the part of the enemy to destroy them. Sheridan's position was such as to enable him to seriously endanger the safety of Early's communications, and the error into which the Confederate commander had fallen was so decided as to invite attack from the superior forces of the enemy.

Hitherto General Sheridan had been held to a strict defensive by General Grant, but by the middle of September the Federal

Commander-in-Chief became convinced that it was advisable to allow his lieutenant to carry out his aggressive designs, and accordingly ordered him to attack Early and destroy his army, leaving Sheridan unfettered by any further instructions. It so happened that this permission was accorded by General Grant just as Early committed the fatal error of dividing his weak army in the presence of such a powerful adversary. Sheridan at once perceived the blunder, and determined to seize Winchester before Early could return to it, and on the afternoon of the 18th of September, marched from Berryville with his whole army.

On the morning of the 18th, General Early, having finished his business at Martinsburg, set out on his return to Winchester, and, in total ignorance of Sheridan's movement, bivouacked that night with Gordon's and Rodes' divisions at Bunker Hill, twelve miles north of Winchester.

At daylight on the morning of the 19th of September, the 6th corps of the Federal army, drove in the pickets at Winchester, and opened a sharp attack upon Ramseur's division, about fifteen hundred strong, posted beyond the town. Fitz Lee at once threw Wickham's cavalry division (also about fifteen hundred strong) on Ramseur's left, and these three thousand men held their ground bravely against nearly six times their number,* resisting successfully every attack until eleven o'clock, when Early arrived from Bunker Hill with Rodes' division. Rodes' men were thrown forward to support Ramseur, and in a short time General Rodes was killed. Gordon's division now came up, and was posted on the extreme left, and soon after Wharton and Lomax made their appearance from the railroad, where they had been holding back Torbert's cavalry division which Sheridan had sent to cut off the divisions of Rodes and

*The opposing forces were the 6th corps and Wilson's cavalry division of Sheridan's army.

Gordon in their march from Bunker Hill. The Southern cavalry were now transferred to the right to prevent Wilson's cavalry from gaining the Valley Turnpike in rear of Winchester.

Just before Wharton arrived, Gordon made a gallant charge with his division, driving the enemy back in his front, but, venturing too far, was himself attacked and forced back, followed hotly by the enemy. The Federals were checked in their advance, and thrown into confusion by the horse artillery of Major Breathed, which had been concealed under the edge of a hill on Gordon's left, and then hurried to the crest immediately after the Federals had passed by in their pursuit of Gordon. Gordon, taking advantage of this, rallied his troops, and, before the enemy could recover from their confusion, made a furious charge upon them, and drove them from the field.

It now seemed that the Federal army was to be defeated, and General Early began to congratulate himself upon his success, when suddenly the prize was wrested from his grasp, for at this moment the 8th corps (Crook's) arrived and took position on the Federal right, forcing Gordon to stop his advance, and fall back. Wharton's infantry now came up, and were placed on Gordon's left. At the same time Torbert's cavalry, which had been held in check by Wharton, arrived, and formed on Crook's right. Their line was semicircular in shape, completely overlapping the Confederate left, and threatening the line of retreat of the army.

At four o'clock, General Sheridan threw forward his army in a general charge, and his cavalry, sweeping around, fell upon the Confederate rear, and seemed by their great strength about to envelope the whole Southern army. The country was perfectly open, and the movement could be seen by the Confederates. Unable to resist any longer, and fearful of being surrounded, they broke in disorder, and fled rapidly through Winchester with the enemy in pursuit.

Early's loss was over three thousand men, of whom twenty-five hundred were prisoners. Among the killed were Generals Rodes and Godwin. Five guns and nine battle-flags were also captured by the enemy. The Federal loss was severe, including General Russell, a division commander of the 6th corps, killed.*

General Early retreated to Fisher's Hill, near Strasburg, and occupied a position of great strength. Concerning this position, a Confederate officer has well said: "When Early took a position on the great range of hills above Strasburg, and waited to be attacked, he committed an error under the circumstances, which the General himself, at this day, would probably acknowledge. The ground there is unsuitable to receive an attack upon, unless the force standing on the defensive is strong enough to reach from mountain to mountain. General Jackson is said to have expressed this opinion, and it is certain that he never made a stand there. General Early did so, and was flanked on the left."

Sheridan followed Early closely, and on the 22nd of September, moved forward to make a direct attack on the Confederate position, at the same time, sending two divisions of cavalry under Torbert by the Luray Valley, to gain New Market, twenty miles in Early's rear. Perceiving that Early was not strong enough to avail himself of the advantages of his position, Sheridan sent a corps of infantry to turn the Southern left at North

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
September 20.

"HON. JAMES A. SEDDON:

"General Early reports that, on the morning of the 19th, the enemy advanced on Winchester, near which place he met his attack, which was resisted from early in the day till near night, when he was compelled to retire. After night he fell back to Newtown, and this morning to Fisher's Hill. Our loss reported to be severe. Major-General Rodes and Brigadier-General Godwin were killed, nobly doing their duty. Three pieces of artillery, of King's battalion, were lost. The trains and supplies were brought off safely.

(Signed,)

R. E. LEE."

Mountain. This was accomplished, and at the same time an attack was made in front. Early's line was broken, his troops driven from their intrenchments, and forced to retreat up the Valley with the loss of sixteen guns, and several hundred prisoners.

General Sheridan expected to capture Early's army, as he was confident that Torbert would be able to occupy New Market, and thus close Early's line of retreat. This would have occurred but for the gallant stand made by the small cavalry division of General Wickham, on the same day. This little band held the Federal cavalry in check at Milford all day, and thus enabled General Early to secure his retreat to the upper passes of the Blue Ridge. By this time, Early had less than five thousand men, and had lost more than half of his artillery. Sheridan pursued as far as Staunton, and there, after destroying a part of the Virginia Central Railroad, withdrew his army behind Cedar Creek.

The successes of General Sheridan were stained with cruelties and barbarism. During his advance and withdrawal, he made the Valley a desert, inflicting such suffering upon its inhabitants as they had never known before. Not even Pope or Hunter had gone so far in this inhuman work. General Sheridan shall tell his own story. In his dispatch to his Government, he says: "In moving back to this point, the whole country, from the Blue Ridge to the North Mountain, has been made entirely untenable for a rebel army. I have destroyed over two thousand barns filled with wheat and hay and farming implements; over seventy mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front of the army over four thousand head of stock, and have killed and issued to the troops not less than three thousand sheep. This destruction embraces the Luray Valley and the Little Fort Valley, as well as the main Valley."*

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 560.

The destruction of crops and provisions is always an extreme measure, and is resorted to by humane commanders with great reluctance; for, while it is true that these supplies, if not destroyed, go to subsist the enemy, it is also true that their destruction entails great suffering upon unoffending non-combatants. Still, as a means of crippling an enemy, the destruction is allowable. But nothing can be said in vindication of the destruction of the mills and agricultural implements, to destroy which was simply to bring the inhabitants of the Valley to a state of starvation, and to curse them with poverty long after the close of the war. It was an act unworthy of the source from which it emanated, and which must always remain a stain upon the fame of him who ordered and him who performed it.

A Northern writer, whose devotion to the Union does not warp his sense of justice, thus refers to General Sheridan's conduct:—

“This dread bulletin recites acts some of which are indefensible. The destruction of the crops, provisions, and forage was allowable; for this deprived the enemy of immediate subsistence, and operated to the end to induce him to surrender. But the burning of the mills and farming implements cannot be justified, for that was to inflict vengeance upon the country for many years to come. It may, indeed, be said that the desolation of the Shenandoah Valley was a special measure designed to cover the frontier of the loyal States from invasion; but this, though plausible, is not a sufficient reason. I have cited, above, the destruction of the Palatinate, and the case is quite in point, both in respect to the act itself and the verdict history will pronounce thereon. ‘When,’ says a legal writer of the highest authority, ‘the French armies desolated with fire and sword the Palatinate in 1674, and again in 1689, there was a general outcry throughout Europe against such a mode of carrying on war; and when the French minister, Louvois, alleged that the

object in view was to cover the French frontier against the invasion of the enemy, the advantage which France derived from the act was universally held to be inadequate to the suffering inflicted, and the act itself to be, therefore, unjustifiable.'”*

General Sheridan was not alone to blame in these outrages. He was acting under the orders of General Grant.†

After retiring to the Upper Valley, General Early was reinforced by Kershaw's division, now reduced to twenty-seven hundred men, and about six hundred cavalry. His losses in artillery were also made up, and his force amounted to about nine thousand men, and forty pieces of artillery.

On the 9th of October Rosser's cavalry, which was harassing Sheridan's rear, were attacked and routed on the Strasburg Turnpike, with a loss of eleven pieces of artillery and several hundred prisoners.

Early continued to move down the turnpike, and by the 18th of October arrived at Cedar Creek, between Strasburg and Winchester. He found the Federal army posted along the east bank of Cedar Creek, behind intrenchments admirably located. The 6th corps (temporarily under General Ricketts), was on the right, the 19th (Emory's) in the centre, and the 8th (Crook's) on the left. The cavalry divisions of Custar and Merritt were posted on the right, and that of Averill on the left. Owing to the temporary absence of General Sheridan, the army was commanded by General Wright.

The Federal position was very strong, and Early's force very

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 560.

† It is true that General Grant wrote to Sheridan on the 5th of August, “It is not desirable that the buildings should be destroyed, — they should rather be protected”; but he also wrote to the same officer, at a later date, — “Do all the damage you can to the railroad and crops. Carry off stock of all descriptions, and negroes, so as to prevent further planting. If the war is to last another year, let the Shenandoah Valley remain a *barren waste*.—U. S. GRANT.” *New York Herald*, October 5, 1864.

weak, yet, by surprising the enemy and striking a powerful and unexpected blow, General Early hoped to gain a victory. He resolved, therefore, to attack at once, making a feint with artillery and cavalry against the enemy's right, while with his infantry he would fall upon their left, where the 8th corps was posted.

He began his march at midnight on the 18th, and hurried on all night over a rugged road, where sometimes his men could scarcely keep their footing, moving towards the north fork of the Shenandoah, which was crossed at dawn by a ford about a mile to the east of the mouth of Cedar Creek. This march of seven miles was successfully performed, and when daylight came, the movement was hidden from the enemy by a thick fog. The enemy had no idea of the danger which threatened them, and, moving on quickly, Early brought his infantry in the rear of the Federal left flank, while the troops of that army were either at breakfast or in bed.

It was the anniversary of the surrender of Yorktown to the Continental army, — the 19th of October, — a glorious day for a victory, and it seemed that a great success was now within Early's grasp. Rapidly forming his line, he swept down upon Crook's camp, driving everything before him, and at the sound of his guns the force he had left in front of the Federal right crossed the creek, and drove back that part of the line (the 19th corps) upon the 6th corps, which was posted a little in the rear in reserve. The camp of the enemy, with everything it contained, eighteen pieces of artillery, and fifteen hundred prisoners, was captured. The surprise was complete, and the enemy, bewildered and panic-stricken, were flying down the Valley Turnpike, while Early, firing rapidly from the guns he had taken, moved on steadily in pursuit.

Seeing that it was his only chance for rallying and reuniting his army, General Wright ordered the 6th corps to retreat, and

fell back, covering the flight of the fugitives. Upon reaching Middletown, General Wright attempted to rally his men, and take up a position to resist Early's advance. The Confederates followed closely, and made a threatening demonstration against the Federal left, when Wright resumed his retreat down the Valley.

The Confederates now abandoned the pursuit, and the majority of them also forsook their colors, and commenced to plunder the captured camp, which was rich in spoils. By this outrageous conduct, — which General Early seems to have tried to check, — the army was demoralized, and the fruits of its brilliant victory lost.

When General Wright retreated beyond Middletown he was by no means *en route* for Winchester, as General Early supposed. At the first suitable position between Middletown and Newtown, he halted and re-formed his line, and by half past ten o'clock A. M. was in readiness either to meet a new attack from Early, or to try to regain his lost camp.

At this moment, General Sheridan, who had heard the firing at Winchester, "twenty miles away," at daybreak, and who had ridden hard all morning to reach the field in time, arrived. Although his presence greatly encouraged his men, General Wright had re-formed the army and opened the way for the victory which followed. Sheridan waited for sometime to receive Early's attack, but finding that the latter did not advance, moved back to regain his lost camp. His task was an easy one. Early's men were utterly demoralized, and had lost all spirit. Gordon's division gave way at once, Kershaw's and Ramseur's quickly followed, and the army was soon in rapid and disorderly flight up the Valley. Sheridan halted his infantry in his old camp, and sent his cavalry across the creek in pursuit. This force harassed the Confederates as far as Strasburg, when the darkness put an end to the operations. Early halted for the

night at Fisher's Hill, and the next day continued his retreat southward.

Sheridan recaptured all the guns he had lost in the morning and took twenty-three others besides, he also retook his camp, and captured fifteen hundred prisoners, as many as he had lost in the early part of the day.

After this defeat General Early issued the following address to his troops :

“HEADQUARTERS VALLEY DISTRICT,
October 22, 1864.

“SOLDIERS OF THE ARMY OF THE VALLEY :

“I had hoped to have congratulated you on the splendid victory won by you on the morning of the 19th at Belle Grove, on Cedar Creek, when you surprised and routed two corps of Sheridan's army and drove back several miles the remaining corps, capturing eighteen pieces of artillery, one thousand five hundred prisoners, a number of colors, a large quantity of small arms, and many wagons and ambulances, with the entire camps of the two routed corps ; but I have the mortification of announcing to you that, by your subsequent misconduct, all the benefits of that victory were lost and a serious disaster incurred. Had you remained steadfast to your duty and your colors, the victory would have been one of the most brilliant and decisive of the war ; you would have gloriously retrieved the reverses at Winchester and Fisher's Hill, and entitled yourselves to the admiration and gratitude of your country. But many of you, including some commissioned officers, yielding to a disgraceful propensity for plunder, deserted your colors to appropriate to yourselves the abandoned property of the enemy, and subsequently those who had previously remained at their posts, seeing their ranks thinned by the absence of the plunderers, when the enemy, late in the afternoon, with his shattered columns, made but a feeble effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day, yielded

to a needless panic and fled the field in confusion, thereby converting a splendid victory into a disaster.

“ Had any respectable number of you listened to the appeals made to you, and made a stand, even at the last moment, the disaster would have been averted and the substantial fruits of victory secured; but under the insane dread of being flanked, and a panic-stricken terror of the enemy’s cavalry, you would listen to no appeal, threat, or order, and allowed a small body of cavalry to penetrate to our train, and carry off a number of pieces of artillery and wagons, which your disorder left unprotected. You have thus obscured that glorious fame won in conjunction with the gallant men of the Army of Northern Virginia, who still remain proudly defiant in the trenches around Richmond and Petersburg. Before you can again claim them as comrades, you will have to erase from your escutcheons the blemishes which now obscure them; and this you can do if you will but be true to your former reputation, your country and your homes. You who have fought at Manassas, Richmond, Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and from the Wilderness to the banks of James River; and especially you who were with the immortal Jackson in all his triumphs, are capable of better things.

“ Arouse yourselves, then, to a sense of your manhood and appreciation of the sacred cause in which you are engaged! Yield to the mandates of discipline; resolve to stand by your colors in future at all hazards, and you can yet retrieve your reputation and strike effective blows for your country and its cause. Let every man spurn from him the vile plunder gathered on the field of the 19th; and let no man, whatever his rank, whether combatant or non-combatant, dare exhibit his spoils of that day. They will be badges of his dishonor; the insignia of his disgrace. The officer who pauses in the career of victory to place a guard over a sutler’s wagon, for his private use, is as

bad as the soldier who halts to secure for himself the abandoned clothing or money of a flying foe, and they both sell the honor of the army and the blood of their country for a paltry price. He who follows his colors into the ranks of the enemy in pursuit of victory, disdaining the miserable passion for gathering booty, comes out of the battle with his honor untarnished; and though barefooted and ragged, is far more to be envied than he who is laden with rich spoils gathered in the trail of his victorious comrades. There were some exceptions to the general misconduct on the afternoon of the 19th, but it would be difficult to specify them all. Let those who did their duty be satisfied with the consciousness of having done it, and mourn that their efforts were paralyzed by the misbehavior of others. Let them be consoled, to some extent, by the reflection that the enemy has nothing to boast of on his part.

“The artillery and wagons taken were not won by his valor. His camps were destroyed, his army terribly shattered and demoralized, his losses far heavier than ours, even in proportion to the relative strength of the armies; his plans materially impeded; and he was unable to pursue by reason of his crippled condition. Soldiers of the Army of the Valley, I do not speak to you in anger; I wish to speak in kindness, though in sorrow. My purpose is to show you the causes of our late misfortune, and point out the way to avoid similar ones in future, and ensure success to our arms. Success can only be secured by the enforcement and observance of the most rigid discipline. Officers, whatever their rank, must not only give orders, but set the example of obeying them, and the men must follow that example.

“Fellow-soldiers, I am ready to lead you again in defence of our common cause, and I appeal to you, by the remembrance of the glorious career in which you have formerly participated, by the woes of your bleeding country, the ruined homes and devastated fields you see around you, the cries of anguish which come

up from the widows and orphans of your dead comrades, the horrors which await you and all that is yours in the future, if your country is subjugated, and your hopes of freedom for yourselves and your posterity, to render a cheerful and willing obedience to the rules of discipline, and to shoulder your muskets again with the determination never more to turn your backs upon the foe, but to do battle like men and soldiers until the last vestige of the footsteps of our barbarous and cruel enemies is erased from the soil they desecrate, and the independence of our country is firmly established. If you will do this, and rely upon the protecting care of a just and merciful God, all will be well; you will again be what you once were, and I will be proud to lead you once more to battle.

J. A. EARLY, *Lieutenant-General.*"

The battle of Cedar Creek was the last event of importance in the Valley campaign, and practically closed it. The defeat experienced by General Early and the desolation of the Valley by General Sheridan, made it impossible for a Confederate army to remain in that region. Towards the close of the fall, the remains of Gordon's, Ramseur's and Rodes' divisions (the old 2d corps) were placed under General Gordon's command, and sent back to Petersburg. Breckenridge's division was transferred to Southwestern Virginia, and almost all of the cavalry were furloughed for the winter, the Government being unable to provide forage for the horses. General Early was left in command of the Valley Department, with his headquarters at Staunton, and the wreck of Wharton's division comprised his army.

His failures made the unfortunate general the object of a great deal of the popular indignation, more in fact than he deserved, and this ran so high that towards the close of the war, General Lee was compelled to relieve him of his command. Yet, sympathizing with him, General Lee sought to soften his mortification by the following generous letter :

“HEADQUARTERS C. S. ARMIES,
March 30, 1865.

“LIEUT. GEN. J. A. EARLY, *Franklin C. H. Va.*

“DEAR SIR: My telegram will have informed you that I deem a change of commanders in your department necessary, but it is due to your zealous and patriotic services that I should explain the reasons that prompted my action. The situation of affairs is such that we cannot neglect any means calculated to develop the resources we possess to the greatest extent, and make them as efficient as possible. To this end it is essential that we should have the cheerful and hearty support of the people and the full confidence of the soldiers, without which our means of resistance is weakened.

“I have reluctantly arrived at the conclusion that you cannot command the united and willing coöperation which is so essential to success. Your reverses in the Valley, of which the public and the army judge chiefly by the results, have, I fear, impaired your influence both with the people and the soldiers, and would add greatly to the difficulties which will, under any circumstances, attend our military operations in Southwestern Virginia. While my own confidence in your ability, zeal, and devotion to the cause is unimpaired, I have nevertheless felt that I could not oppose what seems to be the current of opinion without injustice to your reputation and injury to the service. I therefore felt constrained to endeavor to find a commander who would be more likely to develop the strength and resources of the country, and inspire the soldiers with confidence; and to accomplish this purpose thought it proper to yield my own opinion, and defer to that of those to whom alone we can look for support. I am sure that you will understand and appreciate my motives, and that no one will be more ready than yourself to acquiesce in any measures which the interests of the country may seem to require, regardless of all personal

considerations. Thanking you for the fidelity and energy with which you have always supported my efforts, and for the courage and devotion you have ever manifested in the service of the country,

I am, very respectfully and truly,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

VI.

WINTER QUARTERS.

When active operations ceased before Petersburg, both armies went into winter quarters, — the Federals surrounded by every comfort that their Government could furnish them with, and the Confederates to brave out the long, cold season, and battle with hunger and privation with little to encourage them, and a Government too indifferent to care for their sufferings.

During the winter the citizens of Richmond and Petersburg prepared to give Lee's army a New Year's dinner. Contributions were liberally made, but owing to the unfortunate manner in which the distribution of the provisions was conducted, the good intentions of the citizens were practically defeated.*

* The following letter humorously describes the disappointment of the army :

"I presume thousands of rebels, like myself, expected really a good treat to the inner man, and plenty of it, basing their expectations upon the colossal preparations in Richmond, the great number of Confederate dollars contributed by worthy and patriotic citizens, the glaring articles in the newspapers, and the names of the gentlemen who composed the committee, satisfied all of them that it would be a good thing; and, laboring under these impressions, we prepared accordingly, setting our incisors. The quartermaster and commissary were to have nothing to do with the sumptuous feast, nor were they

The army suffered very greatly for food during the winter. Matters had, indeed, reached such a condition that it was impossible, whether the Confederacy was successful or conquered in the spring, to avert the horrors of a famine — such as visited the South after the failure of the great struggle. This, as I have said so often, was brought about by the gross mismanagement of the Confederate Commissariat.

When the campaign in Northern Virginia began in May 1864, the Commissary-General had only two days' rations for General Lee's army in Richmond. On the 23rd of June, there were but thirteen days' rations on hand, and on that day the Federal cavalry cut the Danville Railroad, which was not repaired for twenty-three days, and to prevent the troops from starving in the meantime, Colonel Northrop was forced to buy uncut or unshocked wheat in the field at market rates. General Lee repeatedly urged the Government to collect thirty days' reserves of provisions at Richmond and Lynchburg, but his advice

invited to partake. Well, on Monday night notice was received at regiment headquarters to send a detail of men, with an officer, to brigade headquarters to receive our quota. [None of the committee have, as yet, made their appearance.] They soon returned with two barrels, holding the dinner. The contents were soon made visible by knocking in the heads. I will give you a list of the contents for the entire regiment, numbering two hundred and sixty men and officers: Thirty-two ordinary-size loaves of bread; two turkeys, one of them a very diminutive specimen of that species of fowl, (some swore that it was a chicken); a quarter of lamb and a horse-bucketfull of apple butter. Well, of course this immense weight of provender had to be divided out to the various companies. After our company had received its due proportion, the whole lot was, by unanimous consent of the company, (numbering thirty men,) condensed into six parts, and by a species of lottery, all thirty participating, the six "piles" fell to six men; so twenty-four received *nothing*, and six *all*. I was on picket at the time, but found, upon my return to camp, that I was one of the successful six, and got the leg of a turkey and a half-pound of mutton, which I soon disposed of, with some fried bacon, red pepper, salt, water, and flour to thicken, making a French dish, which I leave for you to name. So ended our New-Year's dinner. No blame is attached to any one. The undertaking was too great an one; so say all the troops."

was suffered to pass unheeded, and the army was constantly kept in a state of suffering. On the 5th of December, the Commissary-General stated that he had on hand nine days' rations for General Lee's army, and at this time General Lee informed the Government that his troops were deserting for want of food—the rations issued to them being hardly sufficient to sustain life—and urged prompt action. As might have been expected, the Government took no steps to remedy the evil, and on the 14th of December, General Lee informed the President that his army was without meat. Fortunately several vessels loaded with supplies had just arrived at Wilmington, and provisions were hurried forward to Petersburg and Richmond. But for this, the army would have been forced to disband or starve. The condition of the Confederacy with respect to food was thus stated in secret session in the Confederate Congress :

“ *First*, That there was not meat enough in the Southern Confederacy for the armies it had in the field. *Second*, That there was not in Virginia either meat or bread enough for the armies within her limits. *Third*, That the bread supply from other places depended absolutely upon the keeping open the railroad connections of the South. *Fourth*, That the meat must be obtained from abroad through a seaport, and by a different system from that which prevailed. *Fifth*, That the bread could not be had by impressment, but must be paid for in market rates. *Sixth*, That the payments must be made in cash, which, so far, had not been furnished, and from present indications could not be, and, if possible, in a better medium than that at present circulating. *Seventh*, That the transportation was not now adequate, from whatever cause, to meet the necessary demands of the service. *Eighth*, That the supply of fresh meat to General Lee's army was precarious, and if the army fell back from Rich-

mond and Petersburg, there was every probability that it would cease altogether." *

Still the Government delayed, and spent the winter without accomplishing anything, until within a few weeks of the close of the war, when an impracticable scheme was adopted to purchase supplies by paying specie for them. Meanwhile the soldiers were starving.

In this time of suffering and privation it was to be expected that the President, as the head of the nation, would give to the people an example of self-denial, which might cheer and encourage them in their trials. I regret to say that Mr. Davis pursued an opposite course. The following Bill, which was gotten through Congress by his friends, is a specimen of his conduct : —

“FORAGE, FUEL AND LIGHTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

“Mr. Sparrow, from the Military Committee, reported the following bill, which was considered and passed :

“A bill to provide for the lighting and warming of the Executive mansion, and for the supply of forage and commissary stores for the use of the Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the Confederate States.

“*The Congress of the Confederate States of America do enact*, 1st, That it shall be the duty of the Quartermaster-General to provide fuel and lights necessary for the Executive mansion, and forage for six horses for the use Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the Confederate States.

“2. That it shall be the duty of the Commissary-General to furnish the Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the Confederate States the same commissary supplies, and upon the same terms as are now allowed by law to commissioned officers in the field ; and the quantity of commissary supplies allowed

* The Lost Cause, pp. 648, 649, 650.

to be drawn and purchased by the Commander-in-Chief shall be double the quantity allowed to a general in the field; *Provided*, That in case hereafter the annual salary of said Commander-in-Chief shall be paid in par funds, the value of the forage and subsistence given him by this act, and which may be furnished during the period in which payment of said salary in par funds is made, shall be deducted from his salary in the settlement of his account."

This too when the army was starving, and a large part of the cavalry in the field had to be disbanded for want of forage.

In the spring of 1864-65, Confederate Treasury Notes were worth less than two cents in the dollar. A loaf of bread was worth three dollars in Richmond and Petersburg, and a month's pay would scarcely purchase the most trifling article of clothing. Yet, with its money so greatly depreciated as to be almost worthless, the Government was greatly in debt to the army. Not a single man had been given his full pay, and thousands had not received a cent for two years. It would have been some comfort to the men to see the Government meet its obligations, and a still greater comfort to have been able to send the money to those who were starving at home. Yet this was denied them. Mr. Davis and his Aids drew their pay promptly, but the men in the trenches were supposed to have no use for money. When the reader remembers that General Lee's army was the most favored of all the Southern forces, it will not be difficult to imagine the condition of the remainder.

The Conscription had ceased to bring forth men. On the 31st of December General Lee declared that it was diminishing rather than increasing the strength of his army. A pernicious system of details also contributed to bring down his force; and it was a fact which the army did not fail to notice that these details were granted to few but the rich or influential. Rich men, in some way, managed to escape mili-

tary service altogether, and men who were unfit for service by reason of sickness and disease were hurried off to the army to linger out a miserable existence. Indeed as early as the fall of 1864, the Surgeon-General of the Confederacy declared that no man ought to be excused who could serve twenty-four hours in the field, and this inhuman idea was carried out. The result was that the people set themselves against the Conscription, and frequently resisted the enrolling officers with arms.

In view of all this, it was not strange that the troops deserted at a frightful rate. Extravagant as the assertion may seem, it is nevertheless true that no Government ever did so much as the Confederacy to force its army to desert, for no army was ever so badly treated, or with such system. It was with difficulty that the men could be kept together. Hundreds deserted to the enemy, and fully twice as many went home. One of the chief causes of the evil was the weakness of the President. He steadily opposed the enforcing of the law against deserters, and finally it came to be generally understood that no one need fear being shot for desertion, as a commutation of the sentence, if not a pardon, was sure to be granted by the Executive.

If the army was to be kept together, it was necessary that rigid measures should be enforced. The matter was brought before the Government about the last of November by a statement from General Longstreet, who had returned to duty. He said, "Over one hundred of General Pickett's men are in the guard-house for desertion, and the cause of it may be attributed to the numerous reprieves, no one being executed for two months." General Lee indorsed on this paper, "Desertion is increasing in the army, notwithstanding all my efforts to stop it. I think a rigid execution of the law is mercy in the end. The great want in our army is firm discipline." This paper was submitted to the Secretary of War, who referred it to the President "for his information." Mr. Davis returned it with

the following indorsement. "When deserters are arrested they should be tried, and if the sentences are reviewed and remitted, that is not a proper subject for the criticism of a military commander. *Jeff. Davis* — November 29, 1864." *

During the winter the Virginia delegation in Congress, headed by Mr. Bocoek, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, waited on the President, and informed him that they had no confidence in his Cabinet. Mr. Davis treated the address with contempt, and when Mr. Seddon, feeling himself the principal object of this censure, offered his resignation as Secretary of War, the President endeavored to induce him to retain his position, and took occasion to declare that he would in no way change either the policy or course of his administration.

Mr. Davis' besetting sin was his contempt for the wishes of the people whose servant he was under the Constitution, but whose master he aspired to be, and virtually became. His election to the Presidency was a great misfortune to the South, for he proved himself incapable of executing the task assigned him. The people were slow to believe this, but the truth was forced upon them, and when the month of April 1865 opened, Mr. Davis was the most unpopular public man in the South.

The resignation of Mr. Seddon, who was succeeded, too late to accomplish anything, by General Breckenridge, was followed by that of Colonel Northrop, whose place was given to Colonel St. John.

The Government, at the opening of the year 1864, estimated that the Conscription would place four hundred thousand troops in the field. This hope was not realized, and in order to supply the deficiency it was proposed to arm the slaves. A large number of them were employed in the army as laborers, engineer troops, and teamsters, and had given great satisfaction by their efforts, and it was believed that they could be

*Diary of a Rebel War Clerk. Vol. II, pp. 343, 344.

made to fill up the ranks. They had been found to be good soldiers in the Federal army, and it was believed that they would accomplish still more in the Confederate army.

It is my intention to refer to this matter very briefly, and only so far as it concerns General Lee. The limits of this work forbid a full discussion of it.

General Lee favored the proposition, and did all in his power to induce the Government to adopt it. His views are stated at length in the following letter :

“HEADQUARTERS CONFEDERATE STATES ARMIES,
February 18, 1865.

“HON. E. BARKSDALE, *House of Representatives, Richmond :*

“SIR : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, with reference to the employment of negroes as soldiers. I think the measure not only expedient but necessary. The enemy will certainly use them against us if he can get possession of them ; and, as his present numerical superiority will enable him to penetrate many parts of the country, I cannot see the wisdom of the policy of holding them to await his arrival, when we may, by timely action and judicious management, use them to arrest his progress. I do not think that our white population can supply the necessities of a long war without overtaxing its capacity, and imposing great suffering upon our people ; and I believe we should provide resources for a protracted struggle, — not merely for a battle or a campaign.

“In answer to your second question, I can only say that, in my opinion, the negroes, under proper circumstances, will make efficient soldiers. I think we could at least do as well with them as the enemy, and he attaches great importance to their assistance. Under good officers and good instructions, I do not see why they should not become soldiers. They possess

all the physical qualifications, and their habits of obedience constitute a good foundation for discipline. They furnish a more promising material than many armies of which we read in history, which owed their efficiency to discipline alone. I think those who are employed should be freed. It would be neither just nor wise, in my opinion, to require them to serve as slaves. The best course to pursue, it seems to me, would be to call for such as are willing to come with the consent of their owners. An impressment or draft would not be likely to bring out the best class, and the use of coercion would make the measure distasteful to them and to their owners.

“I have no doubt that if Congress would authorize their reception into service, and empower the President to call upon individuals or States for such as they are willing to contribute, with the condition of emancipation to all enrolled, a sufficient number would be forthcoming to enable us to try the experiment. If it proved successful, most of the objections to the measure would disappear, and if individuals still remained unwilling to send their negroes to the army, the force of public opinion in the States would soon bring about such legislation as would remove all obstacles. I think the matter should be left, as far as possible, to the people and to the States, which alone can legislate as the necessities of this particular service may require. As to the mode of organizing them, it should be left as free from restraint as possible. Experience will suggest the best course, and it would be inexpedient to trammel the subject with provisions that might, in the end, prevent the adoption of reforms suggested by actual trial.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

The proposition to arm the slaves was made in November 1864. It was not passed until March 1865, and then the Bill

studiously set aside the recommendation of General Lee. The reward of freedom was not held out to the slaves. The law merely authorized the President to accept such slaves as the masters might choose to put into the military service. In short, no inducement was to be offered to the negro; he was to be forced to fight for his own captivity.

The law having passed in this form, it was not reasonable to expect to raise black troops. Still the effort was made, and it failed. The measure was also passed too late. General Lee wanted the negroes in the fall, so that they might be trained to their duties during the winter, but Congress trifled away the time, and the opportunity for making soldiers of the blacks was lost forever.

Had these troops been raised, it is doubtful whether anything could have been accomplished with them. They would have been so many more men to feed, and would have increased the sufferings of the army. The measure proposed to put two hundred thousand black troops in the field, and at that time there were not arms enough in the South to enable the returned prisoners to go back to duty. It is difficult to understand how the negroes would have been armed; and besides, it was not reasonable to suppose that they would under any circumstances fight for a slaveholding Government.

In January, 1865, an effort was made to secure peace. An interview was held between President Lincoln, Secretary Seward, and others, on the Federal side, and Vice-President Stephens, Senator Hunter, and others, on the Confederate side, on board of a steamer in Hampton Roads, but nothing was accomplished.

Towards the last of February, General Longstreet was informed by General Ord of the Federal army, that General Grant was willing to meet General Lee for the purpose of settling the terms of an honorable peace, provided General Lee

was authorized to act in the matter. President Davis at once conferred upon General Lee full powers, and the Confederate commander notified General Grant that he was ready to open the negotiation. It proved, however, that General Ord had misinformed General Longstreet, having mistaken General Grant's meaning. The following correspondence passed between the two commanders : —

“HEADQUARTERS CONFEDERATE STATES ARMIES,
March 2, 1865.

“LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT, *commanding United States Armies* :

“GENERAL : Lieutenant-General Longstreet has informed me that in a recent conversation between himself and Major-General Ord as to the possibility of arriving at a satisfactory adjustment of the present unhappy difficulties, by means of a military convention, General Ord stated that if I desired to have an interview with you on the subject, you would not decline, provided I had authority to act. Sincerely desiring to leave nothing untried which may put an end to the calamities of war, I propose to meet you at such convenient time and place as you may designate, with the hope that upon an interchange of views it may be found practicable to submit the subjects of controversy between the belligerents to a convention of the kind mentioned.

“In such event I am authorized to do whatever the result of the proposed interview may render necessary or advisable. Should you accede to this proposition, I would suggest that, if agreeable to you, we meet at the place selected by Generals Ord and Longstreet for the interview, at 11 A. M., on Monday next.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

“HEADQUARTERS ARMIES UNITED STATES,
March 4, 1865.

“GENERAL R. E. LEE, *commanding Confederate States Armies* :

“GENERAL: Your two letters of the 20th instant were received yesterday. In regard to any apprehended misunderstanding in reference to the exchange of political prisoners, I think there need be none. General Ord or General Longstreet have probably misunderstood what I said to the former on the subject, or I may have failed to make myself understood, possibly. A few days before the interview between Generals Longstreet and Ord, I had received a dispatch from General Hoffman, Commissary-General of prisoners, stating in substance that all prisoners of war who were or had been in close confinement or irons, whether under charges or sentences, had been ordered to City Point for exchange. I forwarded the substance of that dispatch to Lieutenant-Colonel Mulford, Assistant Agent of Exchange, and presumed it probable that he had communicated it to Colonel Robert Ould. A day or two after, an offender, who was neither a prisoner of war nor a political prisoner, was executed, after a fair and impartial trial, and in accordance with the laws of war and the usage of civilized nations. It was in explanation of this class of cases I told General Ord to speak to General Longstreet.

“Reference to my letter of February 16th will show my understanding on the subject of releasing political or citizen prisoners.

“In regard to meeting you on the 6th instant, I would state that I have no authority to accede to your proposition for a conference on the subject proposed. Such authority is vested in the President of the United States alone.

“General Ord could only have meant that I would not refuse an interview on any subject upon which I have a right to act, which, of course, would be such as are purely of a military

character and on the subject of exchange, which has been entrusted to me.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*"

This last effort for peace having failed, like the first, there was nothing left to the South but to fight the war out to its close.

XII.

THE LAST STRUGGLE.

FEBRUARY — APRIL, 1865.

I.

GENERAL LEE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

WHEN the New Year dawned, matters in the South were in a desperate condition. The people had lost confidence in the President, in the Congress, and in everything but the army; the supply of food was almost exhausted; the army was starving, and all classes were reduced to poverty and want; the Federals held possession of the greater portion of the Southern territory, and were closing in upon the principal armies of the Confederacy. Everywhere ruin threatened the cause.

The loss of confidence in the Government was natural enough. It had done nothing to merit trust, for its course had been a series of blunders from its very inauguration, and now, when the danger which threatened the country was so great, the President and Congress were involved in a disgraceful quarrel, each charging the other with being responsible for the state of affairs, and neither doing anything to encourage the people.

In this hour of darkness the country turned to General Lee, as its last hope. During the entire period between June 1862

and April 1865, he was the only public man whose wisdom was believed in throughout the country, and whose integrity was never impeached; and now men came to the conclusion that if the cause was not already lost, General Lee was the only person capable of saving it. For several years there had been a growing desire to see him at the head of all the armies of the South, for since the fall of Vicksburg, it had been the chief wish of the people to take the control of the armies away from the President, in whose military capacity they had no confidence. Now the demand was made too powerfully to be resisted. The Legislature of Virginia passed a resolution declaring that "the appointment of General Robert E. Lee to the command of all the armies of the Confederate States would promote their efficiency and operate powerfully to reanimate the spirits of the armies, as well as of the people of the several States, and to inspire increased confidence in the final success of our cause."

This resolution was communicated to the President, who replied: "The opinion expressed by the General Assembly in regard to General R. E. Lee, has my full concurrence. Virginia cannot have a higher regard for him, or greater confidence in his character and ability, than is entertained by me. When General Lee took command of the Army of Northern Virginia, he was in command of all the armies of the Confederate States by my order of assignment. He continued in this general command, as well as in the immediate command of the Army of Northern Virginia, as long as I would resist his opinion that it was necessary for him to be relieved from one of these two duties. Ready as he has ever shown himself to be to perform any service that I desired him to render to his country, he left it to me to choose between his withdrawal from the command of the army in the field, and relieving him of the general command of all the armies of the Confederate States. It was only

when satisfied of this necessity that I came to the conclusion to relieve him from the general command, believing that the safety of the Capital and the success of our cause depended, in a great measure, on then retaining him in the command in the field of the Army of Northern Virginia. On several subsequent occasions, the desire on my part to enlarge the sphere of General Lee's usefulness, has led to renewed considerations of the subject, and he has always expressed his inability to assume command of other armies than those now confided to him, unless relieved of the immediate command in the field of that now opposed to General Grant."

President Davis was right. General Lee had always shunned prominence. With a soldier's modesty, he had never sought to thrust himself forward, and had been satisfied to do his duty in whatever position he was placed by the lawful authority of the country. Besides this, he was warmly attached to the President, and this friendship made him blind to Mr. Davis' faults. Mr. Davis was the Constitutional President of the Confederacy, and General Lee felt it his duty to sustain him in that position, and while his personal friendship prompted him to defend the individual, his sense of duty made him quick to condemn any attack upon the official. The kindly relations existing between them were never disturbed during the war, and to the last each possessed the other's perfect confidence.

The position, however, which General Lee held in the spring of 1862, was not what the people now designed for him. Then he was acting "under the direction of the President;" now it was proposed to place the office of Commander-in-Chief beyond the control of the President. The truth is, the people and Congress wished to make General Lee a military dictator, as the last hope of saving the cause, and it is not likely, when it is remembered how extremely jealous of his power was Mr. Davis, that such a step was viewed with any favor by the

Executive, even though the choice of the nation fell upon one so universally beloved as General Lee. It is certain that when the Bill creating the office of Commander-in-Chief was put upon its final passage in the House of Representatives, in secret session, fourteen members, friends of the President, voted against it.* However this may be, the Bill was passed, and approved by the Executive, and on the 5th day of February 1865, a general order from the Adjutant-General's Office, directed General Lee to enter upon his new duties.

General Lee had not sought the high rank now bestowed upon him, and it came to him so unmistakably the act of the nation, that he felt he had no right to refuse it. Much regret has been expressed that he did not make a greater use of the dictatorial power thus confided to him. Whether, in the then hopeless condition of affairs, he could have done more than prolong the war, even had he taken the whole power of the Government into his own hands, as the people and army desired, is very doubtful. The cause of the South was doomed already, and no human power could have saved it at that late day. General Lee's choice was made in view of the obligations resting upon him, and with a sincere desire to promote the interests of his country. If he erred he but proved himself human, and those who regret the decision he made will always respect it, and honor the patriotism which induced it.

* "When the vote came to be taken upon the proposition to put Lee in command of all the Confederate armies, Senator Henry of Tennessee, long the constant and intelligent friend of President Davis — indeed the leader of his party in the Confederate Senate — felt constrained to vote for this important change in the Administration of the Southern Confederacy. On the occasion of a social visit to the family of the President, he was called to task by Mrs. Davis, who bitterly inveighed against the purpose of Congress to diminish the power of her husband. She spoke with a spirit so extraordinary, that her words were well remembered. 'If I were Mr. Davis,' she said, 'I would die or be hung before I would submit to the humiliation.'" — *The Lost Cause*, p. 656.

General Lee entered upon his new command on the 9th of February 1865, and issued the following general order to the armies of the Confederacy :

“HEADQUARTERS CONFEDERATE ARMY,
February 9, 1865.

“GENERAL ORDER,
No. 1.

“In obedience to General Order No. 3, Adjutant and Inspector-General's office, 6th February, 1865, I assume command of the military forces of the Confederate States. Deeply impressed with the difficulties and responsibility of the position, and humbly invoking the guidance of Almighty God, I rely for success upon the courage and fortitude of the army, sustained by the patriotism and firmness of the people, confident that their united efforts, under the blessing of Heaven, will secure peace and independence.

“The Headquarters of the Army, to which all special reports and communications will be addressed, will be, for the present, with the Army of Northern Virginia. The stated and regular returns and reports of each army and department will be forwarded, as heretofore, to the office of the Adjutant and Inspector-General.

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

It is my purpose to confine the remaining portion of this narrative exclusively to the campaign conducted by General Lee in Virginia, and to pass over the events in the other departments now under his command.

II.

FORT STEADMAN.

By the middle of March, General Lee's army numbered about thirty-three thousand men. The troops had been half starved during the winter, they were badly clothed, and poorly provided against the weather. Yet they were cheerful and willing to stand by their commander to the last, and it was a common saying with them, that, though their lot was a hard one, they could stand it "as long as General Lee." The disposition of the army was as follows: The left wing was north and south of the James, and was commanded by General Longstreet, who had returned to duty during the winter; the centre was at Petersburg, under General Gordon; and the right extended from Petersburg to Hatcher's Run, and was in charge of General A. P. Hill. The cavalry, whose horses were scarcely fit for service, guarded both flanks. The line thus occupied was forty miles in length, and in order to cover it the army was posted more like a skirmish line than a line of battle. The labor required of the men was incessant. The thirty-three thousand had to do picket and guard duty, and cover their ground, alternating from one duty to another without rest. There were no reserves to relieve the worn-out men from these arduous labors. The demonstrations of the enemy kept the troops shifting about from point to point along the line, adding greatly to their fatigue, and when a body of men was moved to reinforce some threatened locality, the position from which it was taken was left defenceless. The men knew that there was to be no change in this until the campaign began, and then they

saw nothing before them but defeat and still more suffering. It was a great trial to which their firmness was thus subjected, and only their stern patriotism, and their love for General Lee kept them true to their duty, for hope had completely departed from them.

General Lee was deeply impressed with the danger which threatened the cause of the South, but he was calm and cheerful, doing what he could to raise the drooping spirits of his countrymen. He believed that there was yet a chance for an honorable peace, if not for independence, if the people would prove true to themselves and to the cause.

The situation in which he found himself was critical. Grant was before him with a powerful army, and Sheridan had reached the White House ready to join the Army of the Potomac with his magnificent cavalry. The criminal folly of President Davis had opened the way for General Sherman,* who after marching from Atlanta to the sea, was moving from Savannah towards the James, forcing back the handful of men under the great soldier who had been prevented by the personal hostility of Mr. Davis from serving his country when it was possible to check Sherman. By the 23rd of March, Sherman had reached Goldsborough, North Carolina, and had possession, or was within easy reach of Lee's most important lines of communication with his Southern sources of supply. Goldsborough is only one hundred and fifty miles from Petersburg, and Sherman was steadily

* Mr. Davis not only ruined the cause in the southwest by his interference with the army, but also by his incautious declarations. General Grant says :

"During this time Jefferson Davis made a speech in Macon, Georgia, which was reported in the papers of the South, and soon became known to the whole country, disclosing the plans of the enemy, thus enabling General Sherman to fully meet them. He exhibited the weakness of supposing that an army that had been beaten and fearfully decimated in a vain attempt at the defensive could successfully undertake the offensive against the army that had so often defeated it." — *General Grant's Report*, p. 23.

advancing. The combined strength of Lee and Johnston was scarcely fifty thousand men, while that of Grant and Sherman was near a quarter of a million, and it was evident that without some speedy change of position on the part of the Confederates, the converging Federal columns would crush them.

Disagreeable as it was, General Lee now saw that he must abandon Richmond and Petersburg and retire towards the mountains. His duty was to defend the cause of the Confederacy to the last, and, desperate as was the task, he resolved to perform it faithfully. It has been said that he had made up his mind to surrender before he left Petersburg. This is not true. He was too thorough a soldier to abandon his colors while a hope remained; too sincere a Christian to butcher his troops for the gratification of any feeling of vanity. His intention was to present an unbroken front to the enemy to the last moment, and for himself he preferred death on the field to a surrender.*

The plan adopted by General Lee was as follows: to evacuate the line then held by his army, retreat rapidly towards Danville, unite his army with that of General Johnston, and occupy a strong position in the interior. He determined upon this course early in March, before General Sherman had advanced so far into North Carolina, and measures were at once set on foot for its execution. General Johnston was instructed to retire before Sherman, and manœuvre his left so as to bring it into communication with Lee's right; ponton-trains were collected to enable the army to pass over the streams flowing between Petersburg and the new position; and orders were given to collect a large supply of provisions at Amelia Court House.

The shortest route from Petersburg to Amelia Court House is by a road known as the Cox road, which runs due west from the city, following the general course of the Appomattox River.

* The Lost Cause, p. 680.

It was by this road that General Lee determined to withdraw ; but in order to do so it was necessary to compel General Grant to make a change in his position. The Federal left, the reader will remember, had been extended to Hatcher's Run, very near the Boydton plank road, and this situation brought it so near the Cox road, that the withdrawal of the Confederates by the latter road would be a very dangerous operation. This being the case, General Lee resolved to deal Grant a sudden blow, which should make him draw back his left. The most natural way of accomplishing this was to attack the Federal right, and this General Lee prepared to do.

The Federal position was very strong, and it was hard to find a weak point in it. "A cordon of redoubts of a powerful profile and armed with the heaviest metal, studded this line. Infantry parapets, amply manned, stretched from work to work. Covering the fronts of approach were labyrinthine acres of abatis, while all the appliances of ditches, entanglements, and *chevaux-de-frise* lent their aid to make defence sure and assault folly." * It was a bold venture to attack such a line, but the necessities of the Southern army required it.

The point chosen for attack, was Fort Steadman, a strong work built on a "considerable salient" of the enemy's line, and only about one hundred and fifty yards from the Southern breastworks. General Lee's design was to surprise and capture this work, gain the high ground in its rear, take the neighboring works, and seize the City Point Railroad, the principal line of communication of the Federal army. The assault was to be made by two divisions of Gordon's corps, and all the rest of the troops that could be collected, near twenty thousand in number, were to be held in readiness to support the movement. If Grant tried to recover his lost ground by an immediate attack, General Lee would be ready to meet him ; but if he moved towards City Point to

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 575.

recover his communications, the Southern army was at once to abandon Petersburg and retire by the Cox Road. In any event General Lee believed that Grant would draw in his left to reënforce his right, which was his weaker wing, and that the Cox road would thus be opened. We shall see that this brilliant plan was not carried out as General Lee designed.

The 25th of March was appointed for the attack, and the army held in readiness to depart from Petersburg, if the movement was successful.

In the gray light of dawn on the 25th, Gordon's two divisions noiselessly emerged from their works, in columns of attack, and dashing across the narrow space which separated the two armies, tore away the abatis, and rushed into Fort Steadman, completely surprising the garrison, and carrying the work. Instantly the guns of the captured fort were turned on the adjacent Federal works, and in a short time a brigade of the enemy was put to flight, and batteries Nine, Ten, and Eleven, on the flanks of Fort Steadman were abandoned by the Federals, and occupied by the Confederates. In this brilliant charge, nine pieces of artillery, eight mortars, about five hundred prisoners, and a brigadier-general were captured.

It now remained to carry the other works in the neighborhood, and gain possession of the railroad. Gordon had opened the battle bravely, but he was not sustained. The force on his right which attacked Fort Haskell made but a feeble demonstration, which was quickly repulsed by the enemy. Many of the men could not be induced to advance at all, and even Gordon's troops became demoralized. No effort was made to advance beyond the first line of works to carry the crest in their rear, (which might have been accomplished at first,) but the men huddled into the breastworks, and would not go beyond. The Federals recovered from their surprise, and poured a heavy fire of artillery into the works they had lost, at the same time throwing forward a

strong column of infantry to drive the Confederates from them. The Southern line was broken and beaten back, and the enemy re-occupied their works. Two thousand Confederates surrendered on the spot, and a large number were killed and wounded, making the Southern loss amount to over three thousand, while that of the enemy was in all about twenty-five hundred.*

General Meade followed up the repulse of the Confederates by advancing the 6th corps, which, after a stubborn fight, succeeded in capturing the Southern picket line in its front.

The Confederate plan failed through the misbehavior of the troops at a moment when the most brilliant results were within the grasp of General Lee. The army suffered a heavy loss, which was a great disaster to it at that time, when men were so much needed, and General Grant clung with his left to his advanced position on Hatcher's Run, still endangering the retreat of the Southern army.

* "HEADQUARTERS ARMY CONFEDERATE STATES,
March 25, 1865, — 11.30 P. M.

"HON. J. C. BRECKENRIDGE, SECRETARY OF WAR:

"At daylight this morning, General Gordon assaulted and carried the enemy's works at Hare's Hill, capturing nine pieces of artillery, eight mortars, and between five and six hundred prisoners, amongst them one brigadier-general and a number of officers of lower grade. The lines were swept for a distance of four or five hundred yards to the right and left, and two efforts made to recover the captured works were handsomely repulsed. But it was found that the inclosed works in rear, commanding the enemy's main line, could only be taken at a great sacrifice, and our troops were withdrawn to their original position. It being impracticable to bring off the captured guns, owing to the nature of the ground, they were disabled and left. Our loss, as reported, is not heavy. Among the wounded, are Brigadier-General Terry, flesh wound, and Brigadier-General Phil. Cooke, in the arm.

"All the troops engaged, including two brigades under Brigadier-General Ransom, behaved most handsomely. The conduct of the sharp-shooters of Gordon's corps, who led the assault, deserves the highest commendation. This afternoon, there was skirmishing on the right, between the picket lines, with varied success. At dark the enemy held a considerable portion of the line farthest in advance of our main work.

(Signed)

R. E. LEE."

III.

GRANT MOVES TO THE LEFT.

In the early spring of 1865, General Grant received an important addition to his army. Convinced that there was no further use for an army in the Valley, he withdrew Sheridan's infantry, which he united with his own troops in front of Petersburg. He then instructed General Sheridan to make a raid with his cavalry towards Lynchburg, for the purpose of cutting all the Confederate communications which were beyond the reach of General Sherman.

Sheridan left Winchester on the 27th of February, taking with him his splendid cavalry, ten thousand strong. Early, with his miniature army, — twelve hundred men, — made a feeble effort to check the enemy's advance, but Sheridan, baffling an effort of the Confederates to burn the bridge over the middle fork of the Shenandoah River, crossed the stream on the 1st of March, and entered Staunton on the next day. Pushing on he encountered Early at Waynesboro, scattering his command, capturing more than half of it (nine hundred in all,) and forcing General Early himself to take refuge in the woods. On the 3rd, Sheridan reached Charlottesville, where he halted to await the arrival of his trains, taking care, in the meantime, to destroy such portions of the Virginia Central and Orange and Alexandria railroads as were within his reach.

General Grant's instructions to him, were to occupy Lynchburg, break up the James River Canal and the South Side Railroad, and then march rapidly across the State towards Danville, and unite his column with the army of General Sher-

man. As soon as his trains joined him at Charlottesville, Sheridan proceeded to carry out these instructions; but upon reaching the James, between Richmond and Lynchburg, found the river too much swollen to be crossed, and the bridges all destroyed. This completely prevented him from reaching Lynchburg, and left him but one of two alternatives, — either to go back to the Valley, or attempt to join Grant. With characteristic boldness he chose the latter. Moving to the canal, he destroyed it for several miles in the neighborhood of Columbia, and then, passing around Richmond, reached the White House on the 19th of March, where he was joined by an infantry force which had been sent to him, and furnished with supplies. Having rested and refitted his command, he left the White House on the 24th, marched to the James, crossed that river at Jones' Landing, and on the 26th joined General Grant before Petersburg.

Though this expedition had failed to accomplish the original designs of General Grant, it resulted in a far better state of affairs than the Federal Commander had looked for. It placed ten thousand cavalry in his hands, and contributed to his final success more than any other element in his entire combination.

Apart from this, General Sheridan performed his work of destruction very thoroughly. He destroyed almost every lock on the canal, and cut the embankment in many important places, and the railroads along his route were completely ruined.

The Federal army under General Grant's personal direction, now numbered about one hundred and seventy thousand men, and General Grant resolved to commence his operations at once. His first intention was to defer his advance until General Sherman crossed the Roanoake River; but, fearing that Sherman's approach would induce General Lee to withdraw

from Petersburg, he determined to attack at once, and appointed the 29th of March for the commencement of his advance.

His plan was to repeat his movement to his left, but this time in a wiser and better manner; for, instead of endeavoring, as in former efforts, to turn Lee's right with detached portions of his army, he determined to throw the greater part of his whole force against that flank. His plan was prepared previous to the assault on Fort Steadman, and was stated as follows, in his instructions to his corps commanders:

“On the 29th instant, the armies operating against Richmond will be moved by our left for the double purpose of turning the enemy out of his present position around Petersburg, and to insure the success of the cavalry under General Sheridan, which will start at the same time, in its efforts to reach and destroy the South Side and Danville railroads. Two corps of the Army of the Potomac will be moved at first in two columns, taking the two roads crossing Hatcher's Run nearest where the present line held by us strikes that stream, both moving towards Dinwiddie Court House.

“The cavalry under General Sheridan, joined by the division now under General Davies, will move at the same time by the Weldon road and the Jerusalem plank road, turning west from the latter before crossing the Nottoway, and west with the whole column before reaching Stony Creek. General Sheridan will then move independently, and under other instructions which will be given him. All dismounted cavalry belonging to the Army of the Potomac, and the dismounted cavalry from the middle military division not required for guarding property belonging to their arm of service, will report to Brigadier-General Benham, to be added to the defences of City Point. Major-General Parke will be left in command of all the army left for holding the lines about Petersburg and City Point, subject, of course, to orders from the commander of the Army of

the Potomac. The 9th army corps will be left intact to hold the present line of works so long as the whole line now occupied by us is held. If, however, the troops to the left of the 9th corps are withdrawn, then the left of the corps may be thrown back so as to occupy the position held by the army prior to the capture of the Weldon road. All troops to the left of the 9th corps will be held in readiness to move at the shortest notice, by such route as may be designated when the order is given.

“General Ord will detach three divisions, two white and one colored, or so much of them as he can, and hold his present lines, and march for the present left of the Army of the Potomac. In the absence of further orders, or until further orders are given, the white divisions will follow the left column of the Army of the Potomac, and the colored division the right column. During the movement, Major-General Weitzel will be left in command of all the forces remaining behind from the Army of the James.

“The movement of troops from the Army of the James will commence on the night of the 27th instant. General Ord will leave behind the minimum number of cavalry necessary for picket duty, in the absence of the main army. A cavalry expedition from General Ord's command will also be started from Suffolk, to leave there on Saturday, the 1st of April, under Colonel Sumner, for the purpose of cutting the railroad about Hicksford. This, if accomplished, will have to be a surprise, and therefore from three to five hundred men will be sufficient. They should, however, be supported by all the infantry that can be spared from Norfolk and Portsmouth, as far out as to where the cavalry crosses the Blackwater. The crossing should probably be at Union. Should Colonel Sumner succeed in reaching the Weldon road, he will be instructed to do all the damage possible to the triangle of roads between Hicksford, Weldon, and Gaston. The railroad bridge at

Weldon being fitted up for the passage of carriages, it might be practicable to destroy any accumulation of supplies the enemy may have collected south of the Roanoke. All the troops will move with four days' rations in haversacks, and eight days' in wagons. To avoid as much hauling as possible, and to give the Army of the James the same number of days' supply with the Army of the Potomac, General Ord will direct his commissary and quartermaster to have sufficient supplies delivered at the terminus of the road to fill up in passing. Sixty rounds of ammunition per man will be taken in wagons, and as much grain as the transportation on hand will carry, after taking the specified amount of other supplies. The densely-wooded country in which the army has to operate, making the use of much artillery impracticable, the amount taken with the army will be reduced to six or eight guns to each division, at the option of the army commanders.

“ All necessary preparations for carrying these directions into operation may be commenced at once. The reserves of the 9th corps should be massed as much as possible. Whilst I would not now order an unconditional attack on the enemy's line by them, they should be ready, and should make the attack if the enemy weakens his line in their front, without waiting for orders. In case they carry the line, then the whole of the 9th corps could follow up, so as to join or coöperate with the balance of the army. To prepare for this, the 9th corps will have rations issued to them, same as the balance of the army. General Weitzel will keep vigilant watch upon his front, and if found at all practicable to break through at any point, he will do so. A success north of the James should be followed up with great promptness. An attack will not be feasible unless it is found that the enemy has detached largely. In that case it may be regarded as evident that the enemy are relying upon their local reserves, principally, for the defence of Richmond.

Preparations may be made for abandoning all the line north of the James, except enclosed works, — only to be abandoned, however, after a break is made in the lines of the enemy.

“By these instructions a large part of the armies operating against Richmond is left behind. The enemy, knowing this, may, as an only chance, strip their lines to the merest skeleton, in the hope of advantage not being taken of it, whilst they hurl everything against the moving column, and return. It cannot be impressed too strongly upon commanders of troops left in the trenches not to allow this to occur without taking advantage of it. The very fact of the enemy coming out to attack, if he does so, might be regarded as almost conclusive evidence of such a weakening of his lines. I would have it particularly enjoined upon corps commanders that, in case of an attack from the enemy, those not attacked are not to wait for orders from the commanding officer of the army to which they belong, but that they will move promptly, and notify the commander of their action. I would also enjoin the same action on the part of division commanders when other parts of their corps are engaged. In like manner, I would urge the importance of following up a repulse of the enemy.”*

On the 27th of March, Sheridan's cavalry were moved to the left, and on the same day General Ord, who had succeeded Butler in the command of the Army of the James, crossed from Deep Bottom to the South Side, with three divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, and relieved the 2d and 5th corps in the trenches on the left of the Federal line, thus enabling those troops to take part in the turning movement. The column designed for this operation numbered twenty-five thousand men, and was to be supported by the remainder of the army.

That part of the Confederate line — the right — against which

* I have thought it best to state General Grant's plan of operations in full, and in his own words.

this effort was directed, extended for several miles beyond Petersburg in a southwesterly direction. Crossing Hatcher's Run at the Boydton plank road, it ran westward for some distance, parallel with the stream, and along the White Oak road, covering the South Side Railroad, which was now the chief dependence of the army for food. Four miles west of the right of this line was a detached, though important chain of works, protecting the Five Forks, the point of intersection of several roads with the White Oak road. The importance of this position lay in the fact that it was the key to the whole country in the rear of the Southern line.

The Federal army began its advance at daylight on the 29th of March. Hatcher's Run was crossed without much opposition, being made by the Confederates, and the enemy moved northward towards the Confederate line. Owing to the difficult character of the country the advance was slow. No material resistance was offered them until the 5th corps reached the vicinity of the Quaker road, when the leading division was hotly attacked by a Confederate force, and for a time held in check. The assailants were repulsed, however, and the 5th corps continued to move on until checked by the works on the White Oak road. The 2nd corps, moving on the right of the 5th, halted at nightfall in the thick woods near the main line of the Confederates. Sheridan, operating still farther to the left, succeeded, after a slight encounter, in occupying Dinwiddie Court House, six miles southwest of the bivouac of the 2nd and 5th corps, where he went into camp for the night.

General Grant now altered that part of his plan of operations which concerned the cavalry, and directed General Sheridan to suspend the movement against the South Side Railroad which had been ordered for the next morning, and, in place of it, endeavor to gain the Confederate "right rear," while the infantry sought to carry the intrenched lines opposed to them.

General Grant had hoped to conceal his movement until he

was ready to strike the final blow, but he had scarcely begun it before it was detected and understood by general Lee. The position in which the Confederate commander was placed by the manœuvre of his adversary was desperate, but it did not dishearten him. The defence of his line of forty miles already taxed his army to such an extent that it was with difficulty that the position could be covered, and to take troops from any point for the reënforcement of another was to expose the point thus weakened to almost certain capture. Nevertheless it was the only resource left to General Lee, and he resolved to strip his lines to the greatest possible extent, mass a strong force on his right, and demolish the turning column of the enemy, as he had done before with success. General Longstreet reported the enemy in force in his front, and as it might be the design of the Federals to attack his left wing also, General Lee deemed it most prudent not to weaken General Longstreet, and ordered him to watch the enemy closely in his front, and if he had reason to believe that Grant intended no attack north of the James, to march at once to Petersburg with all the troops he could spare. To meet the danger which threatened his right, General Lee collected from the lines of Petersburg the divisions of Pickett, Bushrod Johnson, and a part of Gordon's corps, and hurried to the right, to the assistance of the force holding that part of the line. This gave him on his right a column of seventeen thousand men. He left behind, to guard the nine miles of intrenchments around Petersburg, about seven thousand men, and in order to cover this line these men were posted nearly five yards apart. But in spite of this, on the night of the 29th, an energetic assault of the enemy in front of General Gordon's position was repulsed.*

"HEADQUARTERS, March 30, 1863.

"GENERAL J. C. BRECKENRIDGE, *Secretary of War*.

"General Gordon reports that the enemy, at 11, P. M., yesterday, advanced against a part of his line, defended by Brig.-General Lewis, but was repulsed.

By the morning of the 30th only a part of the Confederate reënforcements had reached the right wing, but the danger which threatened it was temporarily averted by a severe storm which set in on the night of the 29th, and continued without abating through the 30th, rendering the roads impassable for artillery and cavalry. Taking advantage of this delay, General Lee hurried his infantry westward, and by the next morning had his forces well in hand.

On the morning of the 31st the condition of the roads was still so unfavorable that General Grant was not willing to commence operations, and before he could change his intention General Lee decided the matter for him. At ten o'clock Lee threw forward the force he had collected on his right, and made a spirited attack on the 5th Federal corps. The divisions of Ayres and Crawford were thrown into confusion and driven back, and the Confederates pressed on rapidly. Had the formation usually adopted in these turning movements been practised by the enemy in this case, success would have crowned General Lee's attack; but General Warren, profiting by the experience of the past, had disposed his corps in masses *en échelon*, which disposition enabled them to meet attack from any direction, and promptly reënforce any part of their position.* This skilful arrangement now proved the salvation of the 5th corps, for the retreating troops rallied upon Griffin's division, posted in a considerable clearing, which held its ground. The Federal troops were re-formed, and the Confederate advance checked. A spirited engagement ensued, in which the Southern troops were forced back to their line on the White Oak road. In this counter-attack the 2d corps assisted, and two of its divisions attempted later in the day to carry the works at the intersection

The fire of artillery and mortars continued for several hours with considerable activity. No damage on our lines reported. R. E. LEE."

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 589.

of the Boydton and White Oak roads, but were repulsed with considerable loss.

While this engagement was going on, General Sheridan, being anxious to get possession of Five Forks, sent Devin's division to seize the position, at the same time moving Crook's division to his left to engage the Confederate cavalry which were at Chamberlain's Creek, a short distance west of Dinwiddie Court House. Devin succeeded in driving off the small Southern force present, and occupied Five Forks.

By this time General Lee had drawn off his troops from the attack upon Warren, and now sent Pickett's and Bushrod Johnson's divisions of infantry to drive the Federal cavalry from Five Forks. Advancing along the White Oak road, these two divisions fell upon the cavalry, and drove them in confusion back to Dinwiddie Court House, and following up this success by a sharp attack on Sheridan's whole line succeeded in breaking it, and partly isolating his right; but in executing this movement they exposed their flank and rear to that part of Sheridan's force at the Court House, and were themselves compelled to relinquish their advantage, and fall back. Another effort was made to carry the Federal line, but was unsuccessful, and before it could be renewed, darkness put an end to the fighting. Night found Sheridan still holding his ground, but so hard pressed that, without reënforcements he could not venture upon a renewal of the engagement the next day. He at once made known his situation to General Grant, who deemed it so perilous that he stopped the movements of the rest of the army to send the 5th corps to Sheridan's assistance. There was no necessity for this, however, as General Lee withdrew his force after dark, being unwilling to leave the troops in such an exposed position during the night. General Sheridan discovered this about midnight, and at day break on the 1st of April, advanced his whole command towards Five Forks. On the way

he was joined by the 5th corps, which had been marching all night to his assistance.

IV.

FIVE FORKS AND PETERSBURG.

The critical condition in which General Lee found himself when Grant advanced against his right, left him no alternative but to weaken the lines of Petersburg, as I have described. He had either to submit to having his communications seized and his retreat endangered, if not prevented, or to weaken his centre to such an extent as to render it unfit to maintain itself against any decided assault of the enemy. He had but one thing in his favor — that General Grant having concentrated all his energies in the attempt against the Southern right would not interfere with the centre until the result of the operations in the former quarter was seen. The sequel proved the correctness of this theory. The corps of Parke, Wright and Ord lay in front of this portion of the Southern line, and on the morning of the 1st, Generals Wright and Ord, having ascertained its weakness, urged an assault. General Grant, however, concluded not to attempt it, but to continue his movement towards the South Side Railroad.*

The force which General Lee withdrew from Sheridan's front at Dinwiddie Court House, fell back to Five Forks. It consisted of the divisions of Pickett and Bushrod Johnson, and constituted the bulk of the army.

As soon as he found his front clear, Sheridan made his dispositions to advance, and at daybreak moved forward, throwing

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 597.

out his cavalry, and admirably masking the movements of his infantry with this formidable line. By two o'clock in the afternoon of April 1st, he had driven the Confederates into their works at Five Forks. Leaving a strong force of cavalry to hold the Confederates in front, Sheridan sent a division of horse to threaten the Southern right flank, and at the same time moved up Warren's 5th corps towards the Southern left, where his real attack was to be made.

Warren began his movement about four o'clock, and, advancing through the woods, soon reached the White Oak road, when he closed in on the Confederate left flank which was drawn back at right angles to the main line, and protected by a strong breastwork, about one hundred yards in length, through a dense grove of pines. From this point to Hatcher's Run, the line ran northward, and was held by a small picket force, all that could be spared to cover it. When Warren appeared, a single division was found sufficient to cover the whole of the refused line, leaving the rest of the corps free to outflank it to the north.

As soon as he had brought his troops into position, Warren threw forward Ayres' and Griffin's divisions, and captured the breastworks on the left, and many prisoners, and Crawford's division, swinging around still farther to the left and rear of the Southern line, seized the Ford road, the Confederate line of retreat, and moved down upon the doomed intrenchments. At the same time Sheridan advanced his cavalry, and quickly closed in upon the Confederates.

The divisions of Pickett and Johnson offered but a feeble resistance. The flank movement of Warren's corps caused them to think they were surrounded from the first, and demoralized them so that they made little or no effort to hold their position. Over five thousand men threw down their arms and surrendered, while the rest fled westward from Five Forks, utterly demoralized, and hotly pursued by the Federal cavalry until long after

nightfall. The losses in killed and wounded were small on both sides, but the Confederates lost six or seven guns, and the right wing of the army was torn away from its position, and hurled back.

General Lee had witnessed this disgraceful conduct of his troops, and indignant at it, said to those around him that when the troops were taken into action again, he would place himself at the head of them. Then turning to a general officer present, he ordered him sternly and with marked emphasis, to collect and put under guard "*all* the stragglers on the field," indicating that he meant his words to apply to many of his officers. Such a decided reproof from General Lee, the only instance of the kind on record, could have been drawn out only by some great lack of the wonted devotion of the troops.

As soon as the action at Five Forks ceased, the Federal artillery along the entire line in front of Petersburg opened fiercely upon the Southern position. General Grant was apprehensive that General Lee might suddenly move all his force upon Sheridan, and crush him, and at once sent Miles' division of the 2nd corps to his support. As a means of holding the garrison of Petersburg in its lines, he ordered the bombardment to be continued during the night. At the same time he prepared the corps of Parke, Wright, Ord, and Humphreys, to assault the Southern works at daylight. All night long the Federal guns and mortars threw shot and shell into the Southern intrenchments and the city of Petersburg, preventing the garrison and citizens from enjoying the rest which the fatigues and excitement of the day demanded.

The morning of the 2nd of April found General Lee poorly prepared to meet the great effort which the Federal commander was about to make. His right wing had been destroyed and rendered worthless, and for the defence of his centre, which was now so seriously threatened, he had only the incomplete corps

of Gordon and A. P. Hill. General Longstreet had not yet discovered the weakness of the enemy in his front, and no troops could be drawn from the north side. Nevertheless, General Lee was resolved to make one more effort to save the city.

Sunday, the 2d of April, dawned bright and clear. With the first light of morning the Federal columns of attack advanced upon the Southern works, and the engagement quickly spread along the whole line from the Appomattox to Hatcher's Run. The left of the Southern position rested on the Appomattox, and was held by General Gordon's corps. This weak force was attacked by the 9th Federal corps, under General Parke, and after a brief but gallant struggle the Confederates gave way, and the enemy carried the outer line. Gordon's troops fell back to an inner cordon of works just on the city limits, where they were quickly in line again. The 9th corps, pressing on, attempted to carry these works also, but was repulsed in all its efforts.

To the right of Gordon, A. P. Hill's troops were in position, and against this part of the Southern line the 6th Federal corps was thrown in an impetuous charge. Hill's left was the weakest part of the whole position, as the infantry for its defence (McGowan's brigade) had been withdrawn on the previous day, and the works were held only by the artillerists, with a slim picket line in front. The 6th corps drove in the pickets, and sweeping forward captured the works, the batteries and artillerists.

The movements of the 9th and 6th corps were simultaneous, and the success of the latter threatened the Confederate army with the most serious disaster. Wright's corps had completely broken the left of Hill's line, and threatened to push right through to the river, and cut the Southern force in two. The danger was increased by the attack of the 2d corps, which, as soon as the 6th had carried Hill's works, stormed the redoubts on Hatcher's

Run, and drove the small force of Confederates holding them beyond Sutherland's Station on the South Side Railroad. Then uniting with the 6th and 24th corps, it completed the Federal line which, swinging round, steadily closed in upon Petersburg.

Fortunately there were just in rear of the redoubts captured by the 6th corps, two strong inclosed works, covering the ground over which the enemy must advance to reach the river. These works were held by only a handful of men. Fort Alexander was nearer the enemy, and was garrisoned by a less devoted force than the other. As soon as the Federals had re-formed their line, they made a heavy charge forward, and carried the work with a rush, not, however, without a spirited struggle on the part of the defenders.

There remained now only the other work, — Fort Gregg, — and this it was necessary to hold to the last extremity, in order that General Lee might have time to occupy his new position around the city. If the fort fell before that was accomplished, the army was lost. The garrison of Fort Gregg consisted of the 4th Maryland battery, with two 3-inch rifles and thirty men, a body of dismounted artillery drivers — Virginians and Louisianians — who had been armed with muskets, part of Harris' Mississippi brigade, and some North Carolinians — in all two hundred and fifty men; the whole being under the command of Captain Chew of the Maryland battery. The critical situation of the army was known to this little band of heroes, and they silently resolved to purchase the safety of their comrades with their lives.

As soon as Fort Alexander was captured, General Ord advanced Gibbon's division to storm and carry Fort Gregg, and break through to the city. Gibbon's column approached in fine order, and by its strength alone, seemed about to envelope the work. Moving on rapidly it neared the fort, the Confederates suffering it to come within less than fifty yards. Then,

by a well directed volley, they sent the enemy reeling back across the ground they had passed over. The whole affair could be distinctly seen by both armies, and the repulse of the Federals was greeted by loud cheers from the Confederates in the inner line. Still no aid could be sent to the brave garrison, whose only hope was to die in the presence of the comrades they were trying to save. Both armies ceased firing at other points and every eye was fixed on the fight at Fort Gregg.

Rallying his forces, Gibbon made another desperate attempt to carry the fort, but was again repulsed. A third charge met with the same fate, and for awhile there sprang up in the hearts of the gazers at the city, a wild hope that the fort would be held in spite of the heavy odds against it. Vain hope! At seven o'clock the Federals made a last charge, and this time succeeded in reaching the ditch. Many clambered to the top of the works, but were beaten back by the clubbed muskets of the defenders, while the guns were fired rapidly through the embrasures. The pressure in front was too strong to be resisted, and the enemy swarmed into the work, crushing the garrison by their weight. The fort was won, but the heroic defenders had reason to be proud of its defence. Out of the two hundred and fifty men present when the action began, but thirty survived. There were none missing; the dead and the wounded made up the list. They had inflicted a loss of between five and six hundred men upon their captors, or two Federals for each one of the two hundred and fifty Confederates.

Nor was the sacrifice in vain. Fort Gregg was taken at a little after seven o'clock in the morning, and the two hours gained by its defence enabled General Lee to bring up his troops and occupy his last line around Petersburg.

The enemy did not resume their advance immediately, but spent the next two hours in occupying the entire country towards the Appomattox, throwing their cavalry out on their left to the South Side Railroad and the river above the city.

Towards ten o'clock, General Lee received a small reënforcement. Early on the morning of the 2nd, General Longstreet had discovered the weakness of the Federals in his front, and had marched, promptly with Benning's brigade of Field's division, less than three hundred strong. He reached the battle field just as the enemy — a few minutes before ten o'clock — moved forward again to force an entrance to the city. Longstreet promptly brought Benning's brigade into action, and by his bold and skilful handling of it checked the enemy's advance until General Lee could hurry troops to his assistance, when the line was occupied and firmly held.

The Confederates now occupied a short, but very strong line, extending immediately around Petersburg with the right flank resting on the river above, and the left on the same stream below the city. Against this line the enemy now made repeated assaults, but they were met and repulsed at every point. Not only were the Federals everywhere thrown back in their efforts to advance, but Heth's division under the immediate direction of General A. P. Hill, was ordered to recover some commanding ground held by the 9th Federal corps on the Southern left, near the river. Hill made his attack with great spirit, and pressed the 9th corps so hard with his little command, that the Federals were forced to bring up the garrison of the works at City Point to aid them in maintaining their ground. The enemy held their position, and the Southern troops were withdrawn. Among the killed was Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill. He had passed with high honor through the whole war up to this period with but a slight wound, and fell now a victim to the chivalrous daring for which he was always distinguished.

Thus the day closed with the Confederates in possession of Petersburg. But it was far from General Lee's intention to attempt to hold the city longer. Such a course would involve the capture or destruction of his army, and all that remained

to him now was to abandon both Richmond and Petersburg, and endeavor to join Johnston near Danville. It was no longer possible to retreat by the south bank of the Appomattox, for all the roads were in possession of the enemy, and now the march must be made by the longer route north of the river.

V.

THE EVACUATION OF RICHMOND AND PETERSBURG.

Having decided to abandon the cities he had so long defended, General Lee at eleven o'clock, on the morning of the 2nd of April, telegraphed to the Government that it was his intention to retire from Richmond and Petersburg that night at eight o'clock, and advised the authorities to have everything in readiness to leave the city that night, unless they heard from him to the contrary in the meantime. His efforts now were all directed to the task of holding his line until nightfall, in order that he might move off with his army under the cover of darkness. During the day the tobacco and cotton stored in Petersburg were destroyed, the huge warehouses containing them being given to the flames. Everything was gotten in readiness for the retreat, and the army only awaited the coming of night to begin its last and most memorable march.

Meanwhile stirring events were transpiring at Richmond. The citizens had been kept in utter ignorance by the Government of the true state of affairs south of the Appomattox, and were totally unprepared for the blow which was now about to fall upon them. They were even under the impression that General Lee had gained a decided success, which would, if properly followed up, result in the ruin of the Federal army. They had been cruelly

deceived by the authorities, and given no opportunity to prepare for the misfortune hanging over them.

The city was very quiet on Sunday, the 2nd of April. The churches were thronged with earnest worshippers, and every sight and sound was full of peace. It was hard to realize that only twenty-two miles away, two armies were engaged in the most momentous battle of the war, and still harder to believe that the beautiful city, now so peaceful, was in the course of a few hours to be the scene of so much desolation and suffering. Yet the decree had gone forth. The Confederacy was at an end.

The first warning of the coming danger was given to the congregation of St. Paul's Church. A messenger from the War Department entered hastily, and approaching the President's pew, handed Mr. Davis a small slip of paper. The President read it, and it was observed by those near him that his face grew ghastly white. Yet, controlling his emotion, he left the church in silence. The paper was General Lee's dispatch announcing his purpose to evacuate Richmond. The agitation of the President caused a vague feeling of alarm throughout the congregation at St. Paul's, and soon the church was emptied. The announcement was made that Richmond was to be given up to the enemy. At first it was not believed, but before long it was found to be too true.

As soon as General Lee's dispatch was received, the Government commenced to hurry forward the preparations for its flight. Everything of value that could be carried away was boxed up and sent to the Danville Depot. Crowds of citizens, and women and children hurried to the depot, but were unable to secure transportation, and throngs of vehicles went out of the town by the roads leading northward. Negroes and low whites collected in masses throughout the city, watching for an opportunity to plunder. The Departments were in confusion, not an official

could be found, and no one knew to whom to apply for advice or assistance. In the afternoon, President Davis and his family, accompanied by several of his cabinet, left the city on a special train.* What could not be carried off was prepared for destruction. An effort was made to employ two regiments of militia on duty in the city, in the task of preserving order, but the militia would not obey the orders given them, the majority of them being residents of the city and men of family, who were naturally anxious to look after the safety of their own homes.

At nightfall a scene of the wildest confusion set in. There was a large quantity of liquor in the city, and the Municipal Authorities, as a measure of safety, ordered this to be destroyed. The heads of the casks were knocked in, and the liquor poured into the gutters. The worst classes of the inhabitants, white and black, turned out *en masse*, and a rush was made for the business quarter in the lower part of the city. The commissary stores were appropriated in an amazingly short time—stores of considerable value, which had been denied to the hungry troops in the field. The shops of the merchants were broken open, and entered at pleasure. The contents—jewelry, dry-goods, provisions, property of all kinds—were seized and carried off by the rioters, the owners making no effort to save them, every one being convinced that the city would be sacked by the enemy the next day. Hundreds of drunken men and boys roamed through the streets, adding to the confusion by their cries and yells. To these noises were joined the shrieks and screams of terrified women and children.

While this scene of horror and confusion was going on in the

* When so much selfishness prevailed in high places, any exception to such a course was doubly striking. General Lee, seeking nothing more for himself than was enjoyed by his fellow-citizens, generously refused to remove his family from the city, leaving them there to share the fortunes of the people who loved them so well—a people who will never forget this act of quiet heroism.

city, General Ewell was preparing to withdraw his forces from the north side of the James. His command was four thousand strong, and lay in and below the city, before the column of General Weitzel who had been left by General Grant to watch for an opportunity to take the city. The Federals had remained quiet during the day, but at nightfall all of the bands along their line commenced to play national airs. Ewell set his bands to work at a similar occupation, and this singular "concert" was kept up until nearly midnight. Then everything grew silent, and, the enemy appearing to have no suspicion of the intentions of the Confederates, Ewell commenced to withdraw his troops from their lines towards Richmond. The men began to pass through the city about two o'clock, and it was near daylight when the last soldier was south of the James.

A new horror was now added to the scene. A large quantity of tobacco was stored in the great warehouses of the city. Sometime previous to the evacuation, the Confederate Congress had ordered that if the city had to be given up, the tobacco should be burned, in order to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy. Unfortunately this tobacco was stored in localities where its destruction would be dangerous to the city itself. Appeals were made to the Government to remove the tobacco to a place where the city would not be set on fire by it; but, as a matter of course, these appeals were disregarded. On the night of the 2d, General Ewell received orders from the Government to burn the warehouses containing the tobacco. This order was obeyed; the iron-clads in the James River were blown up, the few vessels at the wharves destroyed, and soon the last of the army was over the river, and the three bridges leading to the south shore were given to the flames. Some unknown person fired the arsenal, and as the flames reached the magazine the structure was blown to pieces, greatly injur-

ing an adjoining building used as an alms-house, and killing several of the paupers there.*

The flames spread from the tobacco warehouses to other parts of the city, and many buildings were fired by the mob with the hope of being able to plunder them of their contents.

By morning the city was in a fearful condition. A large part of it was in flames, and heavy clouds of smoke were floating over it. The wind was blowing directly across the city from the river, spreading the flames slowly and steadily. The lower streets were filled with a cowardly mob of negroes and low whites, shouting and cursing in wild fury. Houses and stores were being plundered. The people dwelling in the endangered quarter were busy moving their furniture into the Capitol square, where hundreds of women and children, rendered homeless by the fire, had sought refuge. The roar of the flames and the crash of falling buildings sounded high over

* Considerable injustice has been done to General Ewell, who has been unfairly held responsible for the burning of the lower part of the city. He was compelled to execute the orders given him, and in their execution refused to carry out the whole programme of the Government. As a soldier he was by his superiors forced to perform acts which his judgment and kind heart condemned. In a letter written during his imprisonment at Fort Warren, he says :

“Remember how hard I tried to organize a constabulary force in Richmond. I knew nothing of the firing of the arsenal or cutting of the engine hose. These were the work of unauthorized persons or incendiaries. I had no force to stop the plundering which was going on all night. I made couriers and policemen of my staff, trying to prevent disorder and violence. Several fires were kindled before we left, and an attempt to burn Mayo’s bridge frustrated by the daring of the engineer officers, who, at great risk, removed burning canal boats from under it. What I did was in obedience to positive orders that had been given me. Looking, with General Kershaw, towards Richmond, we saw building after building, at a distance from the river, ignite, evidently set on fire. I feel this matter very deeply. I see myself unjustly blamed. I did not exceed; but fell short of my instructions.

Yours affectionately,

R. S. EWELL.”

everything, and the constant explosions of shells and ammunition added not a little to the horror of the scene.

Towards seven o'clock there was a violent commotion in the crowd, and the cry of "Yankees! Yankees!" ran from mouth to mouth, while the rioters rushed towards the upper part of the city in the wildest alarm. In a short time a body of forty Federal troopers appeared, riding slowly along the street. Upon reaching the Capitol square, they dismounted, and took possession of the Capitol, from the roof of which their guidons were soon flying in the morning breeze, — the first Union flags that had waved over the city since April, 1861.

General Weitzel had been aroused at daybreak by the strange sounds in the direction of Richmond, and upon advancing his picket line, had found the Confederate works deserted. These he immediately occupied, and sending forward a small detachment of cavalry to reconnoitre and ascertain the exact state of affairs in the city, followed slowly with the remainder of his force. This handful of cavalry first occupied Richmond, and, a few hours later, Weitzel arrived with his two divisions. An eye-witness thus describes his *entrée* : —

"Stretching from the Exchange Hotel to the slopes of Church Hill, down the hill, through the Valley, up the ascent to the hotel, was the array, with its unbroken line of blue, fringed with bright bayonets. Strains of martial music, flushed countenances, waving swords, betokened the victorious army. As the line turned at the Exchange Hotel into the upper street, the movement was the signal for a wild burst of cheers from each regiment. Shouts from a few negroes were the only responses. Through throngs of sullen spectators; along the line of fire; in the midst of the horrors of a conflagration, increased by the explosion of shells left by the retreating army; through curtains of smoke; through the vast aerial auditorium convulsed with the commotion of frightful sounds, moved the

garish procession of the grand army, with brave music, and bright banners, and wild cheers.”*

General Weitzel's first care after occupying Richmond, was to extinguish the flames, but the fire had gained so much force that a large part of the city was destroyed before it could be subdued.

Thus fell the Capital of the Confederacy, that for four years had withstood all the efforts of the enemy. It went down in a sea of suffering and sorrow such as it had never known before.

VI.

THE LAST RETREAT.

Sunday, the 2d of April, wore anxiously away at Petersburg, and when night came the army breathed freer. The sky was lit up with the glare of the burning warehouses, and the heavy reports of cannon shook the city to its foundations. At midnight the army commenced to withdraw from the trenches, and move rapidly and silently through the streets, towards the river. By three o'clock the army was safely on the Chesterfield side, and the bridge was fired. Instantly the magazine of Cummin's battery of siege guns exploded with a deafening roar, followed in a few moments by the magazine at Fort Clifton, on the north side of the river. Then, all along the whole line, from Petersburg to Richmond, heavy explosions followed in quick succession, shaking the ground as with an earthquake. Still the Federal army lay quietly within its own lines, never venturing to move forward to ascertain the cause of these suspicious sights and sounds.

* Letter in the *Norfolk Virginian*.

After leaving Petersburg, the army marched northward to Chesterfield Court House, nearly midway between Petersburg and Richmond. There it was joined by the division of General Mahone, and the rest of the troops that had held the line, south of the James, fronting Bermuda Hundreds; and a little later Ewell arrived with the troops from the lines of Richmond. The army was once more united, but it numbered now less than twenty-five thousand men. The march was resumed from Chesterfield Court House, westward, and by daylight on the morning of the 3d of April, the city of Petersburg was sixteen miles behind.

Meanwhile General Grant had not been idle. Encouraged by his successes, he had displayed a vigor and skill superior to any of his past performances, and was now ready to follow up his triumph. Feeling sure that Lee would retreat at the earliest moment, Grant, on the night of the 2d, made his arrangements to pursue as soon as the withdrawal of the Confederates should be made known to him. There was but one route open to General Lee, — namely, the north shore of the Appomattox, and then by the south side of the same river, through Amelia Court House and Burkesville towards Danville. The 5th Federal corps was already at Sutherland's station, on the South Side Railroad, ten miles west of Petersburg, while Sheridan, with the cavalry, was at Ford's depot ten miles farther west. The position of these forces gave Grant the interior line to the points for which Lee was aiming, and rendered it not improbable from the outset, that by a judicious use of them the Federal commander would be able to intercept his antagonist. On the night of the 2d, the 2d Federal corps, General Humphreys, and a ponton-train were added to the force west of Petersburg, and the 6th and 9th corps, and Ord's command were held in readiness to renew the attack at dawn.

At daylight on the morning of the 3rd, the Federal skirmish-

ers were thrown forward. Meeting with no opposition they rushed into the works and found them deserted. General Grant, leaving a garrison in the city, at once began his pursuit of Lee. The Army of the James, under General Ord, was directed to march, by the line of the South Side Railroad, upon Burkesville, while Sheridan, with the cavalry and 5th corps, followed by the 2d and 6th corps, was ordered to gain the Danville Railroad north of Burkesville.* If these columns could reach their destinations before the arrival of Lee, the Confederates would be cut off from the direct route to Danville, and forced to resort to a long and circuitous march to regain it, or to retreat to the mountains.

The retreat of the Confederate army was continued steadily during the 3rd of April, but the march was greatly impeded by the train of wagons and artillery, many of the former being loaded with the worthless property of the Government, to save which, the officials, who had taken good care for their own security, were willing to risk the safety of the army. The train was thirty miles in length, and delayed the movement greatly.

General Lee was calm and cheerful. To those around him he said, "I have got my army safe out of its breastworks, and, in order to follow me, my enemy must abandon his lines, and can derive no further benefit from his railroads or the James River." Indeed, at this time the Confederate commander had no doubt of his ability to effect a junction with General Johnston. He knew that General Grant would be forced to divide his army in the pursuit, and he hoped to be able to take advantage of this division and defeat the pursuing columns in detail. But, in forming this plan of operations, he had not expected to be burdened in his movements by the Government rubbish, and had based his calculations upon the fact that he expected to find at Amelia Court House, the supplies which he had ordered to

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 605.

be collected there for his army. It is hardly probable that General Lee hoped to save the Confederacy at this late day, but he may have expected, and with good reason, after uniting with Johnston, to be able to gain favorable terms for the South. Upon this point General Lee has as yet been silent, and we can only conjecture what were his hopes. It is certain, however, that he did expect to effect his retreat in safety, which he would have done, had his orders been carried out with regard to his supplies.

The Appomattox was crossed again at Goode's bridge, and on the 4th the army reached Amelia Court House, thirty-eight miles west of the points from which it had started. Here General Lee expected to find a large quantity of quartermaster and commissary stores for his troops, who had eaten nothing since the retreat began. To his astonishment and indignation, he learned that the trains which had been sent from Danville to him had been ordered to Richmond to help to carry off the Government property, and that, through the inexcusable blundering of the Richmond Authorities, the cars had been sent on to the Capital without unloading the stores at Amelia Court House. It was too late now to remedy the blunder. The troops had been without food for nearly two days, and there was not a single ration to be had. It was a terrible blow, and it completely destroyed the hopes with which General Lee began the retreat.

The first thing to be done now was to find food for the men, and to accomplish this, parties were sent out into the surrounding country to procure supplies. This consumed the whole of the 4th and 5th — time which the Confederate commander had expected to use in getting beyond his pursuers. But for the fatal blunder of the Government, he would have preserved his army intact, and have passed beyond Burkesville in safety before the enemy could have reached it. The forced delay at

Amelia Court House, however, enabled Sheridan, who was pressing on with the cavalry, far in advance of the rest of the Federal army, to reach the Confederate line of retreat, and on the afternoon of the 4th he arrived at Jetersville on the Danville Railroad, seven miles southwest of Amelia Court House.

It was now impossible for the Confederates to reach Burkesville, for Sheridan, with eighteen thousand cavalry, held the railroad between the Court House and the Junction, and thus headed them off. This fact and the condition of his army made a battle to be no longer thought of by General Lee. His only alternative now, was to try to escape, and but one route was open to him, to continue his march due west, and endeavor to reach the hilly region around Farmville, where the natural strength of the country would aid him in securing his retreat to the mountains. Farmville was thirty-five miles distant, and his army had been reduced to about twenty thousand men. Nearly half of these had been sent out to procure food, and the whole force had lost its compactness and solidity.

On the night of the 5th, the army left Amelia Court House and marched westward. "The country through which it was moving was a tract of straggling woods and pine barrens, with occasionally little patches of clearings. The foraging parties had to go so far a-field in quest of food, that they were taken prisoners by wholesale. In the fact of such sufferings as they left behind, it cannot be wondered at if some of the poor fellows courted capture. Those foragers who returned to Lee brought little or nothing with them. The sufferings of the men from the pangs of hunger have not been approached in the military annals of the last fifty years. But the sufferings of the mules and horses must have been even keener; for the men assuaged their craving by plucking the buds and twigs of trees just shooting in the early spring, whereas the grass had not yet started from its winter sleep, and food for the unhappy quadru-

pedes there was none. As early as the morning as the 4th, Lee sent off half his artillery towards the railroad to relieve the famished horses. This artillery making slow progress, thanks to the exhaustion of the horses, was captured by the Federals on the 8th, but not until General Lindsay Walker had buried many of his guns, which were, of course, subsequently exhumed (seventy of them at one haul) by their captors.

“It is easy to see that the locomotion of an army in such a plight must have been slow, and slower. The retreat was conducted in the following fashion: About midnight the Confederates slipped out of their hasty works, which they had thrown up and held during the previous day, and fell back until ten or eleven o'clock the next morning. Then they halted, and immediately threw up earthworks for their protection during the day. It was not long before the wolves were again on their heels, and from their earthworks the Confederates exchanged a heavy fire with their pursuers throughout the day. Delayed by the necessity of guarding a train from thirty-five to forty miles in length, enfeebled by hunger and sleeplessness, the retreating army was able to make only ten miles each night. This delay enabled the active Sheridan to get ahead with his cavalry, and to destroy the depots of provisions along the railroad between Burkesville and Danville. Upon the 5th, many of the mules and horses ceased to struggle. It became necessary to burn hundreds of wagons. At intervals the enemy's cavalry dashed in and struck the interminable train here or there, capturing and burning dozens upon dozens of wagons. Towards evening of the 5th, and all day long upon the 6th, hundreds of men dropped from exhaustion, and thousands let fall their muskets from inability to carry them any farther. The scenes of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th were of a nature which can be apprehended in its vivid reality only by men who are thoroughly familiar with the harrowing details of war. Behind, and on either flank, an ubiquitous and

increasingly adventurous enemy — every mud-hole and every rise in the road choked with blazing wagons — the air filled with the deafening reports of ammunition exploding, and shells bursting when touched by the flames — dense columns of smoke ascending to heaven from the burning and exploding vehicles — exhausted men, worn-out mules and horses, lying down side by side — gaunt famine glaring hopelessly from sunken lack-lustre eyes — dead mules, dead horses, dead men, everywhere — death, many times welcomed as God's blessing in disguise — who can wonder if many hearts, tried in the fiery furnace of four years' unparalleled suffering and never hitherto found wanting, should have quailed in presence of starvation, fatigue, sleeplessness, misery — unintermitted for five or six days, and culminating in hopelessness." *

In the meantime, General Meade, late in the afternoon of the 5th, joined Sheridan at Jetersville, with the 2d and 6th corps, and, as it was expected that Lee would attack this force, in order to recover his line of retreat to Danville, General Meade at once intrenched his position, and awaited the arrival of the Confederates. The reader has seen that it was impossible for General Lee to pursue such a course. On the night of the 5th the whole of the Army of the Potomac was concentrated at Jetersville, and on the morning of the 6th General Meade moved towards Amelia Court House to attack General Lee. As he began his march, Meade found that General Lee had given him the slip, and was marching towards Farmville by way of Deatonville. He at once set out in pursuit, sending the 2d corps direct to Deatonville, and moving the 5th and 6th corps by parallel routes to the north and south. The Army of the James, under General Ord, had reached Burkesville, and General Grant now directed Ord to march at once upon Farmville.

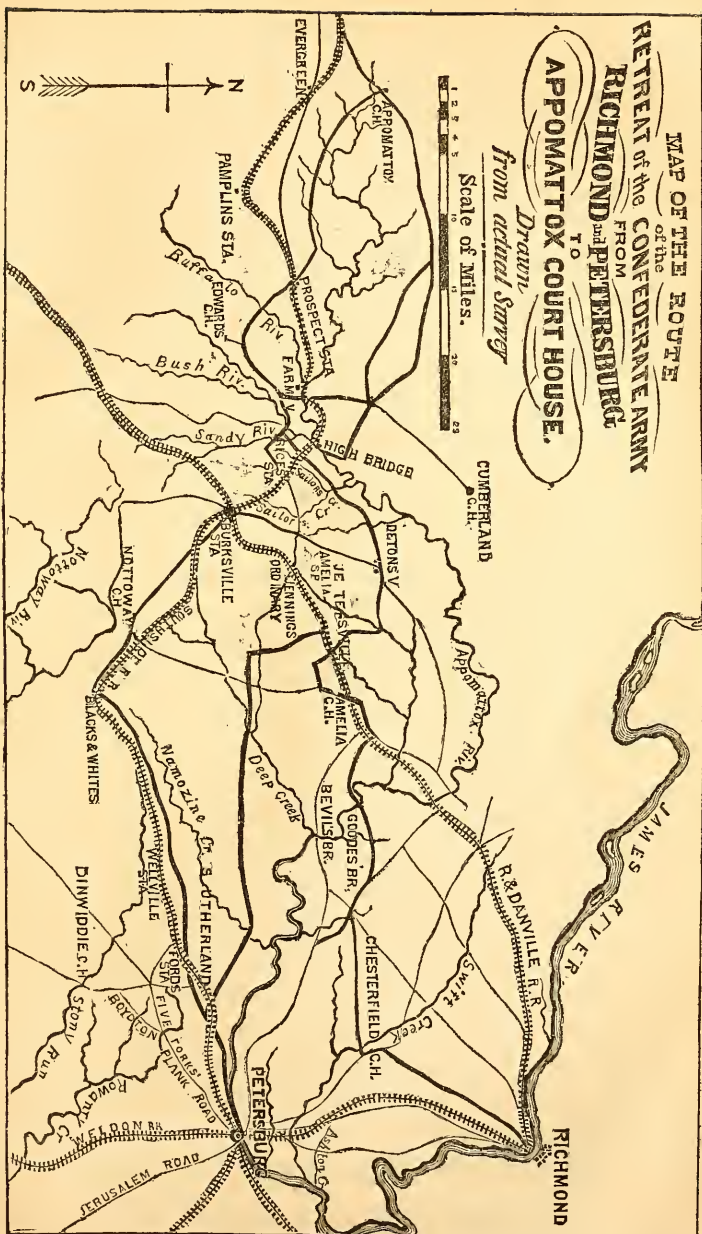
The Confederates retreated rapidly from Amelia Court House.

* Francis Lawley's Narrative.

MAP OF THE ROUTE
of the CONFEDERATE ARMY
RETIREMENT FROM
RICHMOND TO PETERSBURG
APOMATOX COURT HOUSE.

*Drawn
from actual Survey*

Scale of Miles.



Sheridan, with the Federal cavalry, hung closely upon their route. On the 6th he struck the Confederate wagon-train near Deatonsville. The train was escorted by a strong body of infantry and cavalry, and to secure the prize thus brought before him Sheridan adopted an admirable plan. He attacked it at once with a single division, and when repulsed in this attempt renewed the attack farther on with a fresh division, continuing to strike thus all along the line, thinking that by this method he would be sure to find a vulnerable point.

The result proved the correctness of his supposition. When Sailor's Creek, a small tributary of the Appomattox, was reached, Sheridan struck the train with three of his divisions, capturing sixteen pieces of artillery, and a number of prisoners, and destroying four hundred wagons. At the same time Pickett's division, now reduced to eight hundred men, which was guarding the train, was so hard pressed by the cavalry, that General Pickett sent to General Ewell for reënforcements to enable him to hold his ground until the remainder of the wagons could get off in safety. Ewell promptly brought up his corps, — four thousand two hundred strong, — and prepared to hold Sheridan back, but while forming his line of battle, General Ewell discovered that Gordon's corps, which constituted the rear-guard of the army, had taken another road, following the wagon-train, and that the enemy had already occupied the high ground in his rear, cutting him off from the rest of Lee's forces. The situation was desperate, but Ewell resolved to sell his command dearly.

Sheridan threw forward his cavalry and engaged the Confederates in a hot skirmish until the 6th corps came up. The Federal infantry at once attacked, and Ewell fell back slowly, skirmishing so hotly that the advanced division (Seymour's) of the 6th corps was forced to halt until it could be reënforced by a fresh division (Wheaton's).* The men could now see the

* Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, p. 612.

enemy on all sides of them, and they were so much exhausted by fatigue and hunger, as to be scarcely able to stand up in the ranks. Many of them were so worn out that they would drop the guns which they had just loaded or discharged, and, regardless of the firing, sink down upon the ground and fall asleep.*

Ewell formed his line rapidly, and as he did so the 6th corps made a sharp attack upon him. He had been separated from Pickett's division, which was broken and put to flight by the heavy column of the enemy thrown against it, and had been unable to render Pickett any assistance. Yet in this desperate strait, Ewell's veterans proved themselves worthy of their old renown. The advance of the 6th corps was met with a heavy fire which broke the Federal line, and caused it to fall back. The success was only temporary, however, for the enemy soon rallied and renewed their assault, while the cavalry closed in upon the flank and rear of the Confederates. Thus hemmed in on all sides by more than five times their number, Ewell's men threw down their arms and surrendered. All that was left of the corps, together with General Ewell himself, General Custis Lee, and three other general officers, fell into the hands of the enemy.

While this fight was going on, the 2d Federal corps succeeded in capturing a number of prisoners and wagons, together with several pieces of artillery, near the mouth of Sailor's Creek. The effort of the enemy to press on, however, was checked by the Confederate rear-guard.

General Ord, in starting out for Farmville, sent a force of cavalry and artillery to destroy the bridges near that place, in order to prevent Lee from reaching it. This force encountered the head of the Confederate column, and was driven off. The wreck of the Confederate army continued its retreat, and on the night of the 6th crossed the Appomattox at the High Bridge,

* This statement is derived from eye witnesses.

three miles from Farmville, and bivouacked on the opposite side of the river, — Gordon's corps at the High Bridge (the crossing of the South Side Railroad), and Longstreet's corps on the heights around Farmville.

When the river was crossed, the general officers of the army collected around a camp fire to consider their situation, and to take counsel together as to the best line of policy to be pursued. General Lee was not of the number. All present agreed that but three lines of conduct yet remained open to them; either to disband and allow the troops to make their way as best they could to some specified rallying point, to abandon the trains, and with the infantry cut their way through the Federal lines, or to surrender. The first course was equivalent to a desertion of the cause, for it was certain that the army, once disbanded, would not reassemble, and to turn such a throng of starving men upon the country would be to bring still greater misery upon the inhabitants. The second course was doubtful, for it was hardly possible to cut through such an army as that of General Grant, with the little band of Confederates, and if it could be done, starvation was sure to follow. Nothing remained, in the opinion of the council, but to surrender. The army had done all in its power to uphold its cause. This decision was made reluctantly, and General Pendleton, the Chief of Artillery, was appointed to communicate it to General Lee.

The Confederate commander was not yet ready to surrender. While feeling keenly the grave responsibilities of his position, and sympathizing deeply with the sufferings of his troops, he did not believe that he could yet surrender his army with honor. There was still a chance for escape, and it was his duty to endeavor to avail himself of it.

VII.

THE SURRENDER.

Having decided that the moment for the surrender of his army had not yet arrived, General Lee prepared to continue his retreat.

As soon as the Confederates had crossed the Appomattox, the railroad and stage road bridges were fired. Gordon, on the morning of the 7th, left one brigade to guard the crossing until the bridges were destroyed, and moved towards Farmville with the rest of his command. At the same time the 2d Federal corps arrived, and making a sharp attack drove off the brigade left by Gordon, and saved the stage road bridge entire, and also the High Bridge, with the exception of two spans which were burned. The enemy then dashed forward towards the Confederate wagon train, drove off the guard and captured a number of the wagons. Gordon at once moved back a part of his force, compelled the enemy to withdraw, and captured two hundred prisoners.

The Confederates continued their retreat during the 7th with but little molestation, except the frequent dashes of the enemy's cavalry upon the wagon train. The enemy followed closely, and early in the morning occupied Farmville. The 2d Federal corps was pushed forward, and about noon General Humphreys found his advance checked by the main body of Lee's army, which was strongly intrenched in a commanding position four or five miles north of Farmville, covering the stage and plank roads to Lynchburg. Lee had halted here to rest his army, and hold his pursuers in check until nightfall. Humphreys found the works too strong to be attacked in front, and made an at-

tempt to take them in flank; but, upon finding he was confronting Lee's whole army, he sent for reënforcements. While awaiting their arrival, he attacked the Southern left, and was repulsed with a loss of over six hundred in killed and wounded. When the Federal reënforcements came up, night had fallen, and the enemy decided to suspend the attack until morning.

Upon occupying Farmville, General Grant dispatched a messenger to General Lee with the following communication :

“ APRIL 7, 1865.

“ GENERAL :

“ The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General*.

GENERAL R. E. LEE.”

This document was handed to General Lee that night. He at once sent the following reply :

“ APRIL 7, 1865.

“ GENERAL :

“ I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express on the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

R. E. LEE, *General*.

“ LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT.”

During the night the Confederates resumed their retreat towards Lynchburg, and the movement had been in progress for some hours when General Grant received General Lee's letter. He immediately replied :

“APRIL 8, 1865.

“GENERAL :

“Your note of last evening, in reply to mine of same date, asking the condition on which I will accept the surrender of the army of Northern Virginia, is just received. In reply, I would say that *peace* being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon, namely : that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms again against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General*.

GENERAL R. E. LEE.”

To this General Lee responded as follows :

“APRIL 8, 1865.

“GENERAL :

“I received, at a late hour, your note of to-day. In mine of yesterday, I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army ; but, as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of

Northern Virginia : but, as far as your proposal may affect the Confederate States' forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 A. M. to-morrow, on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket lines of the two armies.

R. E. LEE, *General*.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT."

On the 9th General Grant wrote :

"APRIL 9, 1865.

"GENERAL :

"Your note of yesterday is received. I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace ; the meeting proposed for 10 A. M. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, General, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be settled without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, &c.,

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General*.

GENERAL R. E. LEE."

On the night of the 7th the Confederate army fell back from its intrenched line, and marched rapidly towards Lynchburg. At dark on the 8th the head of the column reached Appomattox Court House. The army was now moving on a narrow neck of land between the Appomattox and the James rivers. Lynchburg was only twenty-four miles distant, but there was danger that the enemy might throw their cavalry in advance of

the Confederates, and thus close up the outlet. The march had been conducted during the 8th with singular freedom from fighting. Scarcely a gun had been fired the whole day, and the men began to think they might reach Lynchburg after all.

Suddenly, however, heavy firing was heard in front. Then an order was received from General Lee to cut down all the extra artillery and disband the commands. The dream of security in which the army had for a moment indulged was abandoned, and the men awoke to the knowledge that their retreat was cut off.

It was indeed the case. Sheridan had marched hard during the 7th and 8th, and towards dark on the 8th had reached Appomattox Station, on the South Side Railroad, five miles south of Appomattox Court House, and had captured four trains of cars, loaded with supplies, *en route* from Lynchburg to Lee's army. Then planting his command across the Confederate line of retreat he prepared to hold his position, knowing that the Army of the James would join him in the morning, while the Army of the Potomac would push forward in the rear of the Southern forces.

All that now remained to General Lee was to cut his way through Sheridan's lines, and he ordered General Gordon to do so at all hazards at sunrise.

The Army of Northern Virginia had now been reduced to eight thousand men with muskets in their hands. Gordon's corps, about two thousand strong, was thrown out in front, while Longstreet's shattered command held the rear. Between these two weak lines was the remnant of the wagon-train, and huddled around the vehicles were several thousand unarmed stragglers, who had been rendered too weak, by hunger and fatigue, to carry their muskets. The cavalry, about three thousand strong, were almost unfit for service by reason of the sufferings of both men and horses. Yet this little skeleton army was

about to attempt to cut its way through the powerful lines of General Sheridan.

At sunrise on the 9th, Gordon moved forward to attack the enemy, and upon reconnoitering the Federal position, discovered that it was held by dismounted cavalry. Making a sharp attack he drove Sheridan's troopers back upon Ord's infantry which had now come up, and this force being brought forward, Gordon was himself forced back. Finding that he could not hold his ground, Gordon sent word to General Lee that the enemy were driving him back.

When the message reached the Confederate Commander, that officer found that he could no longer hope to reach Lynchburg. His last resource had been taken from him and further resistance would merely sacrifice the army. The time had come to surrender. General Lee at once sent a flag of truce to General Sheridan asking for a suspension of hostilities, with a view to a surrender. At the same time he dispatched the following note to General Grant :

April 9, 1865.

"GENERAL :

"I received your note this morning on the picket line, whither I had come to meet you and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposition of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army.

"I now request an interview in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

"TO LIEUT.-GENERAL GRANT,

"Commanding Armies of the United States."

The desired interview was granted by General Grant, who replied :

April 9, 1865.

“GENERAL R. E. LEE, COMMANDING CONFEDERATE STATES ARMIES :

“Your note of this date is but this moment, 11.59 A. M. received.

“In consequence of my having passed from the Richmond and Lynchburg road to the Farmville and Lynchburg road, I am at this writing, about four miles west of Walter’s Church, and will push forward to the front for the purpose of meeting you.

“Notice sent to me on this road where you wish the interview to take place, will meet me :

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*”

The meeting of the two commanders was held at the house of Mr. Wilmer McLean, in the village of Appomattox Court House. There, sitting at a deal table, they drew up their famous agreement, the one proposing, and the other accepting the conditions upon which the Army of Northern Virginia passed into the domain of history, General Lee was calm and dignified. “His demeanor,” says a Federal officer, who witnessed the scene, “was that of a thoroughly possessed gentleman, who had a very disagreeable duty to perform, but was determined to get through it as well and as soon as possible.”

The agreement was embodied in the two following papers :

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, VA.,

April 9, 1865.

“GENERAL :

“In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th instant, I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on the following terms, to wit : Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be given to an officer to be designated by me, and the other to be

retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the United States until properly exchanged; and each company or regimental commander to sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property, to be parked and stacked, and turned over by the officers appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to his home, not to be disturbed by United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*"

"GENERAL R. E. LEE.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
April 9, 1865.

"GENERAL :

"I have received your letter of this date containing the terms of the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th instant, they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulations into effect.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

"LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT.

For the adjustment of the details of the surrender, General Lee appointed as commissioners, Lieutenant-General Longstreet, Major-General Gordon, and Brigadier-General Pendleton, while General Grant designated for the same purpose, Major-Generals Gibbon, Griffin, and Merritt. These Commissioners met the next day, and drew up the following agreement :

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, April 10, 1865.

Agreement entered into this day in regard to the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia to the United States authorities.

“ 1st. The troops shall march by brigades and detachments to the designated point, stack their arms, deposit their flags, sabres, pistols, &c., and thence march to their homes under charge of their officers, superintended by their respective divisions and corps commanders, officers retaining their side arms and the authorized number of private horses.

“ 2nd. All public horses and public property of all kinds to be turned over to staff officers, to be designated by the United States authorities.

“ 3rd. Such transportation as may be agreed upon as necessary for the transportation of the private baggage of officers will be allowed to accompany the officers, to be turned over at the end of the trip to the nearest United States Quartermaster, receipts being taken for the same.

“ 4th. Couriers and mounted men of the artillery and cavalry, whose horses are their own private property, will be allowed to retain them.

“ 5th. The surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia shall be construed to include all the forces operating with that army on the 8th instant, the date of the commencement of the negotiations for surrender, except such bodies of cavalry as actually made their escape previous to the surrender, and except also such pieces of artillery as were more than twenty miles from Appomattox Court House at the time of surrender on the 9th instant.

(Signed,)

JOHN GIBBON, *Maj.-Gen. Vols.*

J. LONGSTREET, *Lieut.-Gen.*

CHARLES GRIFFIN, *Brevet Maj.-Gen.*

J. B. GORDON, *Maj.-Gen.*

U. S. Vols.

W. N. PENDLETON, *Brig.-Gen. and*

W. MERRITT, *Brevet Maj.-Gen.*

Chief of Art'y."

The terms accorded by General Grant were generous and noble. Whatever cause he may have given to the Southern people at any former period to think harshly of him, he more than atoned for it in this act, and they should never forget or cease to appreciate the manly spirit with which he refused to take advantage of their distresses and helplessness, as so many of his countrymen demanded. General Grant may well be proud of it, for it was the greatest act of his life.

I must now return to the army. When the flag of truce appeared on Gordon's line, a feeling of surprise and curiosity to know what it meant pervaded the ranks. Soon it was told from man to man that the army was to be surrendered to the enemy. General Lee had been seen riding to the rear, dressed with more care than usual, and with his sword, which he rarely wore, buckled on. Later it was stated authoritatively that the service of the army was at an end. The emotions of the men are hard to describe. There was a feeling of relief that the long, unequal struggle was over, mingled with an agonized regret for the failure of the cause they had so nobly upheld. The troops were very silent, in their grief, and they moved about and spoke to each other with that hushed, subdued air which men wear when in the presence of death.

Soon General Lee was seen returning to his quarters from his interview with General Grant. The emotion of the men could be no longer controlled. Whole lines of battle broke ranks, and rushing up to him, crowded around their beloved commander, sobbing out words of comfort and affection, striving with "a refinement of unselfishness and tenderness which he alone could fully appreciate, to lighten his burden, and mitigate his pain," and struggling with each other to take him once more by the hand. General Lee, usually so thoroughly master of himself, was completely overcome. With tears pouring down both cheeks, he exclaimed with deep emotion, "Men, we have

fought through the war together. I have done the best that I could for you." Nothing more was said; nothing more was needed.

The next day General Lee took a formal leave of the army in the following noble address :

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
April 10, 1865.

"After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.

"I need not tell the survivors of so many hard fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that could compensate for the loss that would have attended the continuation of the contest, I have determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

"By the terms of agreement, officers and men can return to their homes, and remain there until exchanged.

"You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed; and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection.

"With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

R. E. LEE, *General.*"

The victors were considerate and generous in all things. They issued food liberally to the starving troops of the van-

quished army, and carefully refrained from anything that might seem to insult the fallen greatness which they could but admire.

On the 12th of April the Army of Northern Virginia formed by divisions for the last time. Marching to a spot near Appomattox Court House, the troops parked their artillery, stacked their muskets, deposited their accoutrements, and laid down forever the colors they loved so well. About seven thousand five hundred men with arms surrendered, but there were present, and included in the capitulation nearly eighteen thousand unarmed stragglers. Two thousand cavalry under Fitzhugh Lee and Rosser had effected their escape previous to the closing in of Sheridan's lines, but these afterwards surrendered and were included within the terms granted to the rest of the army. The surrender was received by Major-General Gibbon, of the Federal army, General Grant generously remaining at his quarters.

The Confederate officers and men were paroled, the army was disbanded, and the survivors turned their faces homeward. The great Army of Northern Virginia that had been so long the admiration of the world was now a thing of the past.

General Lee, accompanied by his Staff, had already departed for Richmond, and on the afternoon of the 12th, reached it. Passing through the city, he rode towards his residence. On the way he was recognized, and a crowd of citizens and Federal soldiers at once surrounded him, greeting him with loud cheers, in which the Federals joined right heartily. Riding rapidly to escape them, he reached his house. As he dismounted, the crowd pressed upon him, and the cheers grew louder. It was the greeting of a conqueror rather than that of the conquered. After acknowledging the compliment, and shaking hands with those who were immediately around him, he escaped into his home, which had been scrupulously respected and protected by the Federals.

It does not belong to this narration to describe the closing scenes of the Confederacy.* That task must be performed by the historian of the war. My work is done. I have followed General Lee from his infancy to the surrender of the great army which his genius made so glorious, and I lay down my pen, with the hope that I have not labored in vain. Neither is it permitted to me to tell how, grateful for the service he had rendered them, the people of Virginia selected him to preside over the training of their children, in the institution founded by the illustrious Washington; nor to tell how great the Southern commander has proved himself in the peaceful and modest retirement of his home. There may he long remain, surrounded by the love and respect of his countrymen, and the admiration of those in all lands that honor the Christian soldier, who, having been charged with the fate of a nation, never failed in his duty, but was faithful unto the end.

* See Note H.



NOTES.

A

The following correspondence occurred between General Lee and the Federal Authorities in communicating the views and intentions of the Southern Government.

“HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA,
July 21, 1862.

“TO MAJOR-GENERAL G. B. McCLELLAN, COMMANDING ARMY OF THE
POTOMAC :

“GENERAL : It has come to my knowledge that many of our citizens, engaged in peaceful avocations, have been arrested and imprisoned because they refused to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, while others, by hard and harsh treatment, have been compelled to take an oath not to bear arms against that Government.

“I have learned that about one hundred of the latter class have recently been released from Fortress Monroe. This Government refuses to admit the right of the Authorities of the United States to arrest our citizens and extort from them their parole not to render military service to their country, under the penalty of incurring punishment in case they fall into the hands of your forces. I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you that such oaths will not be regarded as obligatory, and persons who take them will be required to render military service. Should your Government treat the rendition of such service by these

persons as a breach of parole, and punish it accordingly, this Government will resort to retaliatory measures, as the only means of compelling the observance of the rules of civilized warfare.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed),

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

"HEADQUARTERS OF ARMY UNITED STATES,
WASHINGTON, August 13, 1862.

"TO MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, COMMANDING ARMY OF THE
POTOMAC :

"GENERAL : I have just received from the Adjutant-General's office your letter of July 30th, inclosing a letter from General R. E. Lee, of July 21st.

"The letters of General Dix and Major Moore will furnish you with the proper information for a reply to Gen. Lee's complaints in regard to the treatment of prisoners at Fortress Monroe. The Government of the United States has never authorized any extortion of oaths of allegiance or military paroles, and has forbidden any measures to be resorted to tending to that end.

"Instead of extorting oaths of allegiance and parole, it has refused the applications of several thousand prisoners to be permitted to take them and return to their homes in the rebel States.

"At the same time, this Government claims and will exercise the right to arrest, imprison, or place beyond its military lines any persons suspected of giving aid and information to its enemies, or of any other treasonable act ; and if persons so arrested voluntarily take the oath of allegiance, or give their military parole, and afterwards violate their plighted faith, they will be punished according to the laws and usages of war. You will assure Gen. Lee that no unseemly threats of retaliation on his part will deter this Government from exercising its lawful rights over both per-

sons and property, of whatever name or character. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed,) H. W. HALLECK, *Gen.-in-Chief U. S. Army.*

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY U. S.,
WASHINGTON, August 7, 1862.

“TO GEN. R. E. LEE, COMMANDING CONFEDERATE STATES ARMY:

“GENERAL: Your letter of July 6th was received at the Adjutant-General's office on the 14th, but supposing from its endorsement that it required no further reply, it was filed without being shown to the President or Secretary of War. I learn to-day, for the first time, that said letter had been received, and hasten to reply.

“No authentic information has been received in relation to the execution of either John Owen or Mumford, but measures will be immediately taken to ascertain the facts of those alleged executions, of which you will be duly informed.

“I need hardly assure you, General, that so far as the United States Authorities are concerned, this contest will be carried on in strict accordance with the laws and usages of modern warfare, and that all excesses will be duly punished.

“In regard to the burning of bridges within our lines by persons in disguise as peaceful citizens, I refer you to my letter of the 22nd of January last to General Price. I think you will find the views there expressed as not materially differing from those stated in your letter. In regard to retaliation by taking the lives of innocent persons, I know of no modern authority which justifies it, except in the extreme case of a war with any uncivilized foe, which has himself first established such a barbarous rule. The United States will never countenance such a proceeding, unless forced to do so by the barbarous conduct of an enemy who first applies such a rule to our citizens.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. W. HALLECK, *General-in-Chief, U. S. Army.*”

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE "C. S."

NEAR RICHMOND, Aug. 2, 1862.

"TO THE GENERAL COMMANDING THE ARMY OF THE U. S., WASHINGTON :

"GENERAL : On the 29th of June last I was instructed by the Secretary of War to inquire of Major-General McClellan as to the truth of alleged murders committed on our citizens by officers of the United States army. The cases of Wm. B. Mumford, reported to have been murdered at New Orleans, by order of Major-General B. F. Butler, and Colonel John Owen, reported to have been murdered in Missouri, by order of Major-General Pope, were those referred to. I had the honor to be informed by Major-General McClellan that he had referred these inquiries to his Government for a reply. No answer has as yet been received.

"The President of the Confederate States has since been credibly informed that numerous other officers of the army of the United States within the Confederacy, have been guilty of felonies and capital offences which are punishable by all laws, human and divine. I am directed by him to bring to your notice a few of those best authenticated. Newspapers received from the United States announce as a fact that Major-General Hunter has armed slaves for the murder of their masters, and has thus done all in his power to inaugurate a servile war, which is more than that of the savage, inasmuch as it superadds other horrors to the indiscriminate slaughter of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

"Brigadier-General Phelps is reported to have initiated in New Orleans, the example set by Major-General Hunter, on the coast of South Carolina. Brigadier-General G. N. Fitch is stated, in the same journals, to have murdered, in cold blood, two peaceful citizens, because one of his men, while invading our country, was killed by some unknown person while defending his home.

"I am instructed by the President of the Confederate States

to repeat the inquiry relative to the cases of Mumford and Owens, and to ask whether the statements relative to the action of Generals Hunter, Phelps, and Fitch, are admitted to be true, and whether the conduct of these generals is sanctioned by their Government.

“I am further directed by his Excellency, the President, to give notice that, in the event of not receiving a reply to these inquiries within fifteen days from the delivery of this letter, it will be assumed that the alleged facts are true, and are sanctioned by the Government of the United States. In such event, on that Government will rest the responsibility of the retribution or retaliatory measures which shall be adopted to put an end to the merciless atrocities which now characterize the war against the Confederate States.

I am, most respectfully, your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*”

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE “C. S.”

NEAR RICHMOND, Aug. 2, 1862.

“TO THE GENERAL COMMANDING U. S. ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C. :

“GENERAL: In obedience to the order of His Excellency, the President of the Confederate States, I have the honor to make to you the following communication :

“On the 22d July last, a cartel for a general exchange of prisoners of war was signed between Major-General D. H. Hill, in behalf of the Confederate States, and Major-General John A. Dix, in behalf of the United States.

“By the terms of the cartel it is stipulated that all prisoners of war hereafter taken shall be discharged on parole till exchanged.

“Scarcely had that cartel been signed when the military authorities of the United States commenced a practice changing the whole character of the war, from such as becomes civilized nations into a campaign of indiscriminate robbery and murder.

“The general order issued by the Secretary of War of the United States, in the city of Washington, on the very day the cartel was signed in Virginia, directs the military commanders of the United States to take the private property of our people for the convenience and use of their armies, without compensation.

“The general order issued by Major-General Pope, on the 23d day of July, the day after signing of the cartel, directs the murder of our peaceful inhabitants as spies, if found quietly tilling the farms in his rear, even outside of his lines, and one of his Brigadier-Generals, Steinwehr, has seized upon innocent and peaceful inhabitants to be held as hostages, to the end that they may be murdered in cold blood if any of his soldiers are killed by some unknown persons whom he designates as ‘Bushwhackers.’

“We find ourselves driven by our enemies by steady progress towards a practice which we abhor, and which we are vainly struggling to avoid. Under these circumstances, this Government has issued the accompanying general order, which I am directed by the President to transmit to you, recognizing Major-General Pope and his commissioned officers to be in the position which they have chosen for themselves, — that of robbers and murderers, and not that of public enemies, entitled, if captured, to be treated as prisoners of war.

“The President also instructs me to inform you that we renounce our right of retaliation on the innocent, and will continue to treat the private enlisted soldiers of General Pope’s army as prisoners of war; but if, after notice to your Government that we confine repressive measures to the punishment of commissioned officers, who are willing participants in those crimes, the savage practice threatened in the order alluded to be persisted in, we shall be reluctantly forced to the last resort of accepting the war on the terms chosen by our enemies, until the

voice of an outraged humanity shall compel a respect for the recognized usages of war.

“While the President considers that the facts referred to would justify a refusal on our part to execute the cartel by which we have agreed to liberate an excess of prisoners of war in our hands, a sacred regard for plighted faith which shrinks from the semblance of breaking a promise, precludes a resort to such an extremity; nor is it his desire to extend to any other forces of the United States the punishment merited by General Pope, and such commissioned officers as choose to participate in the execution of his infamous order.

“I have the honor to be very respectfully your obedient servant,

(Signed)

R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*”

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, Aug. 9, 1862.

“GENERAL R. E. LEE, COMMANDING CONFEDERATE STATES ARMIES:

“GENERAL: Your two communications of the 2d instant, with enclosures, are received. As these papers are couched in language exceedingly insulting to the Government of the United States, I must respectfully decline to receive them. They are returned herewith.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. W. HALLECK,
General-in-Chief U. S. Army.”

B

The assertion made concerning the superiority of the Federal cavalry over that of the Confederates needs an explanation, and I have concluded to present it here rather than in the body of

the work, so that I may not interrupt the thread of the narrative.

When the war began, the Southern Government was decidedly reluctant to employ cavalry in its army, and it was not until the necessity of this branch of the service had been forced upon it that it consented to authorize the enlistment of cavalry. No encouragement was ever held out to this arm of the service. A narrow policy influenced the Government throughout the war. The men were required to provide their own horses. The popular idea seems to be that this is the best way to secure good horses. The experience of the war proved the contrary. The Government of a country will always provide better horses than can be purchased by individuals, one reason being that it has more ready money for this purpose, and a wider field to select from. Besides this, the war proved that the owners of horses were unwilling to risk them in a fight. Men are always more willing to place the property of other persons in danger than to hazard their own. The reader will readily agree with me that it is suicidal in a Government to fail to remove, at any cost, the cause of any hesitation on the part of so important a branch of the service. The horses of the Confederacy were, owing to the miserable mismanagement of the Quartermaster's Department, almost always half starved. In this condition they were required to perform the most arduous service, which so greatly weakened them that it was impossible for the cavalry commanders of the Southern army to keep their troops in a good state of discipline. The Federal cavalry had an abundance of forage, and were thus enabled to keep their horses so well fed that their drills were but exercise for them, and in battle they had the advantage which a disciplined force always enjoys over undisciplined troops.

Another cause was the manner in which the troops were armed. At the outset of the war the Southern cavalry were

armed with the sabre. This, unfortunately, was soon superseded by the pistol, and finally by the gun, musket, or any other species of fire-arms the men could procure. The Government failed to provide a sufficiency of sabres — the true weapon of the cavalry — and neglected, or refused to arm the men with the light carbine, such as was used in the Federal service. The result was that the Southern horsemen were not cavalry in the strict sense of the term. They were part cavalry, but principally mounted infantry, employing their horses to carry them into the fight, and then dismounting and using their heavy muskets or rifles. Their pistols were only good at close quarters, and even then the superiority of the sabre showed itself. So far as the men themselves were concerned, no better material ever existed. They were brave and reckless in attack, full of fire and enthusiasm, and capable of enduring, as they often did with cheerful courage, the severest hardships. In this respect the Federal troops never surpassed them. The real cause of the deficiency of the Southern cavalry was the neglect with which this part of the service was treated by the Government.

In this connection the following letter from Major-General W. H. F. Lee, written near the close of the war, is both interesting and valuable. •

“ RICHMOND, November, 29, 1864.

“ SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23d instant. As to the requirements and principles to be observed in the reorganization of the cavalry, and to-day comply as succinctly as possible with your wishes relative to my ideas on the subject.

“ The cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia is composed of the best material for troopers in the world. They are intelligent men, naturally excellent riders, and mounted on good horses, and require only, to make them more efficient, organization. First, more horse feed; second, to be more thoroughly

and constantly drilled mounted ; third, to be better armed. As far as my observation extends, the cavalry are well drilled on foot and with the sabre, as far as laid down in the cavalry tactics, but could not be perfected in the mounted drill for the reason that the horses, from want of a sufficient supply of food, cannot stand the required work. The enemy, on the contrary, being supplied in greater abundance, their mounted drills are mere exercise for the horses ; and, in this respect only (save in numbers,) is their cavalry superiors to ours. Here is the advantage. Badly drilled squadrons charge, the men scatter in every direction ; opposing squadrons, well drilled, moving in compact mass, fall upon the isolated fragments and overwhelm them in detail. Experience teaches the proper arm for cavalry to be — a pistol, (Colt's navy size the best,) a breech-loading carbine, (Sharp's preferred,) and a sabre. The Government has never been able to supply the demand for cavalry arms ; they ought to be imported. Our most efficient arms have been captured from the enemy, but of course not in sufficient quantities to meet the demand.

“The Government ought to furnish horses, at least to meritorious troopers who are no longer capable of furnishing their own ; and next, to all cavalry serving out of their own States. Existing orders now require permanently dismounted men to be transferred to infantry, which is manifestly unjust to the deserving, well-trained trooper, whose circumstances are reduced, in many instances, by the enemy's incursions and depredations. Cases exist, however, sometimes requiring the transfer of cavalrymen to infantry organizations ; for such men, soldiers, particularly distinguished for feats of courage, should be exchanged as an equivalent. The military axiom, that in all well disciplined, drilled commands, one soldier is as good as another, approximates to a nearer degree of truth with reference to infantry than cavalry ; for whilst the former admit of a higher

state of discipline, the latter fight more detached and scattered, and individual dash has a greater influence. It generally requires, too, more courage to go into a fight on horseback than on foot. Should this principle be observed, the infantry soldier would have an incentive to deeds of valor, viz: the reward of putting him on horseback — and the cavalry be composed of men who would ride up to and over almost anything.

“There should be *prompt* and just legislation to provide payment for all horses killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty, whether in action or otherwise, as long as the ownership remains with individuals. The regimental quartermaster ought to have the authority, with the approval of the Colonel, and upon the necessary certificates, to pay all such accounts in his regiment.

“Now soldiers are paid for horses *only* when killed in battle, and the accounts have to pass through so many hands, that an unnecessary delay is produced even in that payment. A courier riding his horse a given number of miles in a given time, bearing important despatches, breaks his horse down and has to abandon him, receives nothing, although he is *ordered* to make the time. A soldier has his horse permanently disabled by a wound, probably necessitating his being left in the enemy's hands, receives nothing, and, unless he can purchase another, is transferred to infantry.

“I have written very hastily, but I think you will see what is really wanting. Whilst cavalry cannot play the important part in large combats, owing to the improved range of arms, nature of country, &c., it formerly has done in European wars, still the demand for it everywhere is very great, and unless Congress takes the matter in hand, and legislates more liberally on the subject, the enemy next spring will ride rough-shod over the whole State.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

W. F. LEE, *Major-General.*”

C

The system of furloughs is given at length in the following order.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

August 16, 1863.

“GENERAL ORDERS,

No. 84.

“In order to allow as many of our brave soldiers to visit their families and friends as can be done consistently with the good of the service, and at the same time give some reward for meritorious conduct, a system of furloughs is hereby instituted in this army.

“These furloughs will be granted, in the first instance, at the rate of two for every one hundred men present for duty; subsequently, at the rate of one for every one hundred men present for duty.

“This system will be continued as long as the exigencies of the service will permit. Should the effect not be found prejudicial, commanders of regiments and battalions will forward on each occasion, the most urgent and meritorious cases from those recommended by the company officers, for the approval of their superior commander.

“The time will be regulated according to the following table:

“Virginia, 15 days; North Carolina, 18 days; South Carolina, 20 days; Georgia and Tennessee, 24 days; Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, 30 days.

“Furloughs will be granted equally to soldiers from States and districts with which communication is cut off, but in no case will these furloughs carry permission to go within the enemy's

lines or pass through them. The time for such cases will be regulated by the number of days allowed for the State in the above list which they intend to visit.

“The men furloughed will be authorized to bring back stragglers and recruits who may come in their way.

By command of GENERAL R. E. LEE,
W. H. TAYLOR, A. A. G.”

D

That it was Colonel Dahlgren's intention to commit the atrocities mentioned, admits of no doubt. The following address to his command, which was found upon his person, will prove this. It was written on a sheet of paper, having in printed letters on the upper corner —

“HEADQUARTERS THIRD DIVISION CAVALRY CORPS.

“OFFICERS AND MEN :

“You have been selected from brigades and regiments as a picked command to attempt a desperate undertaking — an undertaking which, if successful, will write your names on the hearts of your countrymen in letters that can never be erased, and which will cause the prayers of our fellow soldiers now confined in loathsome prisons to follow you and yours wherever you may go.

“We hope to release the prisoners from Belle Island first, and having seen them fairly started we will cross the James River into Richmond, destroying the bridges after us, and exhorting the released prisoners to destroy and burn the hateful city, and do not allow the rebel leader Davis and his traitorous crew to escape. The prisoners must render great assistance, as

you cannot leave your ranks too far or become too much scattered, or you will be lost.

“Do not aow any personal gain to lead you off, which would only bring you to an ignominious death at the hands of citizens. Keep well together, and obey orders strictly, and all will be well, but on no account scatter too far; for in union there is strength.

“With strict obedience to orders, and fearlessness in the execution, you will be sure to succeed.

“We will join the main force on the other side of the city, or perhaps meet them inside.

“Many of you may fall; but if there is any man here not willing to sacrifice his life in such a great and glorious undertaking, or who does not feel capable of meeting the enemy in such a desperate fight as will follow, let him step out, and he may go hence to the arms of his sweetheart, and read of the braves who swept through the city of Richmond.

“We want no man who cannot feel sure of success in such a holy cause.

“We will have a desperate fight; but stand up to it when it does come, and all will be well.

“Ask the blessing of the Almighty, and do not fear the enemy.

U. DAHLGREN, *Colonel Commanding.*”

Besides this address were the following “special orders and instructions,” which were written upon a similar sheet of paper, giving an outline of the whole plan of the enemy;

“Guides — Pioneers (with oakum, turpentine, and torpedoes) — Signal Officer — Quartermaster — Commissary :

“Scouts and pickets — Men in rebel uniform :

“These will remain on the north bank and move down with

the force on the south bank, not getting ahead of them ; and if the communication can be kept up without giving alarm, it must be done ; but everything depends upon a surprise, and NO ONE must allowed to pass ahead of the column. Information must be gathered in regard to the crossings of the river, so that should we be repulsed on the south side we will know where to recross at the nearest point. All *mills* must be *burned*, and the *canal destroyed* ; and also everything which can be used by the rebels must be destroyed, including the boats on the river. Should a ferry-boat be seized and can be worked, have it moved down. Keep the force on the south side posted of any important movement of the enemy, and in case of danger some of the scouts must swim the river and bring us information. As we approach the city, the party must take great care that they do not get ahead of the other party on the south side, and must conceal themselves and watch our movements. We will try and secure the bridge to the city (one mile below Belle Isle,) and release the prisoners at the same time. If we do not succeed, they must then dash down, and we will try and carry the bridge from each side.

“ When necessary, the men must be filed through the woods and along the river bank. The bridges once secured, and the prisoners loose and over the river, the bridges will be secured and the city destroyed. The men must keep together and well in hand, and once in the city it must be destroyed, and *Jeff. Davis* and *Cabinet* killed.

“ Pioneers will go along with combustible material. The officer must use his discretion about the time of assisting us. Horses and cattle, which we do not need immediately, must be shot rather than left. Everything on the canal, and elsewhere, of service to the rebels, must be destroyed. As Gen. Custar may follow me, be careful not to give a false alarm.

“The signal-officer must be prepared to communicate at night by rockets, and in other things pertaining to his department.

“The quartermasters and commissaries must be on the lookout for their departments, and see that there are no delays on their account.

“The engineer-officer will follow to survey the road as we pass over it, &c.

“The pioneers must be prepared to construct a bridge or destroy one. They must have plenty of oakum and turpentine for burning, which will be rolled in soaked balls and given to the men to burn when we get in the city. Torpedoes will only be used by the pioneers for destroying the main bridges, &c. They must be prepared to destroy railroads. Men will branch off to the right, with a few pioneers, and destroy the bridges and railroads south of Richmond, and then join us at the city. They must be well prepared with torpedoes, &c. The line of Falling Creek is probably the best to work along, or, as they approach the city, Goode's Creek; so that no reënforcements can come up on any cars. No one must be allowed to pass ahead for fear of communicating news. Rejoin the command with all haste, and, if cut off, cross the river above Richmond, and rejoin us. Men will stop at Bellona Arsenal and totally destroy it, and anything else but hospitals; then follow on and rejoin the command at Richmond with all haste, and, if cut off, cross the river and rejoin us. As Gen. Custar may follow me, be careful and not give a false alarm.”

In addition to the above, the private note book of Colonel Dahlgren contained the following memoranda, some of which seem to have been written with great haste.

“Pleasanton will govern details.

“Will have details from other commands (four thousand).

“Michigan men have started.

“ Colonel J. H. Dévereaux has torpedoes.

“ Hanover Junction (B. T. Johnson).

“ Maryland Line.

[Here follows a statement of the composition and numbers of Johnson's command].

“ Chapin's Farm — seven miles below Richmond.

“ One brigade (Hunton's relieved Wise, sent to Charles-town].

“ River can be forded half a mile above the city. No works on South Side. Hospitals near them. River fordable. Canal can be crossed.

“ Fifty men to remain on north bank, and keep in communication, if possible. To destroy mills, canal, and burn everything of value to the rebels. Seize any large ferry boats, and note all crossings, in case we have to return that way. Keep us posted of any important movement of the rebels, and, as we approach the city, communicate with us, and do not give the alarm before they see us in possession of Belle Isle and the bridge. If engaged there, or unsuccessful, they must assist in securing the bridges until we cross. If the ferry boat can be taken and worked, bring it down. Everything that cannot be secured or made use of must be destroyed. Great care must be taken not to be seen or any alarm given. The men must be filed along off the road or along the main bank. When we enter the city the officer must use his discretion as to when to assist in crossing the bridges.

“ The prisoners once loosed and the bridges crossed, the city must be destroyed, burning the public buildings, &c.

“ Prisoners to go with party.

“ Spike the heavy guns outside.

“ Pioneers must be ready to repair, destroy, &c. Turpentine will be provided. The pioneers must be ready to destroy

the Richmond brigades, after we have all crossed, and to destroy the railroad near Frederick's Hall, (station, artillery, &c.)

* * * * *

“Fifteen men to halt at Bellona Arsenal, while the column goes on, and destroy it. Have some prisoners. Then rejoin us at R; leaving a portion to watch if anything follows, under a good officer.

“Will be notified that Custar may come.

“Main column, four hundred.

“One hundred men will take the bridge after the scouts, and dash through the streets and open the way to the front, or, if it is open, destroy everything in the way.

“While they are on the big bridges, one hundred men will take Belle Isle, after the scouts instructing the prisoners to gut the city. The reserve (two hundred) will see this fairly done and everything over, and then follow, destroying the bridges after them, and then destroy the city; going up the principal streets and destroying everything before them, but not scattering too much, and always having a part well in hand.

“Jeff Davis and Cabinet must be killed on the spot.”

The proof afforded by these papers will not admit of a doubt of the murderous intention of the Federal commander. The authenticity of the papers has been denied by the father of Colonel Dahlgren, but the denial was accompanied by no proof. The genuineness of the papers is well shown by the following letter from General Fitz Lee, in transmitting them to the War Department, and the statement of Mr. Halbach, which follows it.

“ HEADQUARTERS LEE’S DIVISION,
“ CAVALRY CORPS, ARMY NORTHERN VA.,

March 31, 1864.

“ GENERAL S. COOPER, ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL :

“ GENERAL : I have the honor to enclose to you Colonel Dahlgren’s note book, just sent to me by Colonel Beall, commanding 9th Virginia cavalry. Had I known of its existence it would have been forwarded with the ‘ papers.’

“ His name and rank is written on the first page, with the date (probably) of his purchasing it. The book, amongst other memoranda, contains a rough pencil sketch of his address to his troops, differing somewhat from his pen and ink copy. I embrace this occasion to add, the original papers bore no marks of alteration, nor could they possibly have been changed except by the courier who brought them to me, which is in the highest degree improbable ; and the publications of them in the daily Richmond papers were exact copies, in every respect, of the original.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

“ (Signed)

FITZ LEE,

Major-General Commanding.”

STATEMENT OF EDWARD W. HALBACH.

“ In the summer of 1863, I, Edward W. Halbach, was living at Stevensville, in King and Queen county, Virginia. I had already been exempted from military service on account of the condition of my health, and was now exempt as a school-master, having the requisite number of pupils. But feeling it my duty to do what I could to encounter the raids of the enemy, I determined to form a company of my pupils between the ages of thirteen and seventeen years. My commission and papers prove that the company was formed, and accepted by the Pre-

sident for 'Local Defence.' A member of this company, thirteen years of age at the time, captured the notorious 'Dahlgren Papers.' The name of this boy is William Littlepage.

"Littlepage and myself were at Stevensville when the rangers passed that place on their way to the appointed place of ambush. Being determined to participate in the affair, we set off on foot having no horses to ride, and reached the rendezvous a little after dark. The Yankees came up in a few hours and were fired on. Immediately after this fire, and while it was still doubtful whether the enemy would summon up courage enough to advance again, in a word, before any one else ventured to do so, Littlepage ran out into the road, and, finding a 'dead Yankee' there, proceeded to search his pockets to see, as he said, if he might not be fortunate enough to find a watch. The little fellow wanted to own a watch, and as the Yankees had robbed me, his teacher, of a gold watch a short while before, I suppose he concluded that there would be no harm in his taking a watch from a 'dead Yankee;' but his teacher always discouraged any feeling of this kind in his pupils. Littlepage failed to secure the prize by not looking in the overcoat pockets, and the watch (for there was really one) was found afterwards by Lieutenant Hart. But in searching the pockets of the inner garments, Littlepage *did find* a cigar-case, a memorandum book, &c.

"When the Yankees had been driven back and thrown into a panic by the suddenness of our fire and the darkness of the night, a Confederate lieutenant, whom the enemy had captured at Frederick's Hall, embraced the opportunity presented to make his escape, and actually succeeded in getting over to our side.

"We could, by this time, hear the enemy galloping rapidly over the field, and arrangements were soon made to prevent their possible escape. Our force determined to go down the road towards King and Queen Court House, and barricade it.

“ But, as before mentioned, myself and the only member of my company I had with me, were on foot, and unable to keep up with the horsemen. It was therefore decided that the prisoners whom we had captured should be left in my charge. In the confusion, however, all the prisoners had been carried off by others, save the one claiming to be a Confederate officer, which he afterwards proved to be — and a gallant one at that. But, under the circumstances, I felt compelled to treat him as an enemy until time should prove him a friend.

“ Wishing to find a place of safety, and feeling that it would be hazardous for so small a party to take any of the public roads (for we knew not how many more Yankees there were nor in what direction they might come), I decided to go into the woods a short distance, and there spend the night. My party consisted of myself, Littlepage, the ‘ lieutenant,’ and several other gentlemen of King and Queen County. We walked into the woods about a quarter of a mile and sat down.

“ Up to this time, we had not even an intimation of the name and rank of the officer commanding the enemy. In fact, we felt no curiosity to know. All we cared for was to punish as severely as possible the raiders with whom we were contending. We knew that *one* man was killed, but knew not who he was. We were just getting our places for the night, and wrapping up with blankets, garments, etc., such as we had, for the ground was freezing, and we dared not make a fire, when Littlepage pulled out a cigar-case and said,

“ ‘ Mr. Halbach, will you have a cigar?’

“ ‘ No,’ said I; ‘ but where did you get cigars these hard times?’

“ He replied that he had got them out of the pocket of the Yankee who had been killed, and that he had also taken from the same man a memorandum book and some papers.

“ ‘Well,’ said I, ‘William, you must give me the papers, and you may keep the cigar-case.’

“ Littlepage then remarked that the dead Yankee had a wooden leg. Here, the ‘lieutenant,’ greatly agitated, exclaimed :

“ ‘How do you know he has a wooden leg?’

“ ‘I know he has,’ replied Littlepage, ‘because I caught hold of it and tried to pull it off.’

“ ‘There!’ replied the lieutenant, ‘you have killed Colonel Dahlgren, who was in command of the enemy. His men were devoted to him, and I would advise you all to take care of yourselves now, for if the Yankees catch you with anything belonging to him, they will certainly hang us all to the nearest tree.’

“ Of course it was impossible for us to learn the contents of the papers without making a light to read them by, or waiting until the next morning. We did the latter; and, as soon as day broke the papers were read and found to contain *every line and every word* as afterwards copied into the Richmond newspapers. Dahlgren’s name was signed to one or more of the papers, and also written on the inside of the front cover of his memorandum book. Here, the date of purchase, I suppose, was added. This book had been written with a degree of haste clearly indicated by the frequent interlineations and corrections, but the orders referred to had also been rewritten on a separate sheet of paper; and, as thus copied, were published to the world. Some of the papers were found loose in Dahlgren’s pockets, others were between the leaves of the memorandum book.

“ The papers thus brought to light were preserved by myself in the continual presence of witnesses of unquestionable veracity, until about two o’clock in the afternoon of the day after their capture; at which time myself and party met Lieutenant

Pollard, who, up to this time, knew nothing in the world of the existence of the Dahlgren Papers. At his request I let him read the papers, after doing which he requested me to let him carry them to Richmond. At first I refused, for I thought that I knew what to do with them as well as any one else. But I was finally induced, by my friends, against my will, to surrender the papers to Lieutenant Pollard, mainly in consideration of the fact that they would reach Richmond much sooner through him than through a semi-weekly mail. The papers which were thus handed over to the Confederate Government, — I state it again, — *were correctly copied by the Richmond newspapers.*

“A thousand and one falsehoods have been told about this affair, by our own men as well as by the Yankees. Some of our men were actuated by motives of selfishness and ambition to claim each one for himself the whole credit of the affair, when, in fact, the credit belongs to no particular individual, but, collectively, the whole of our party. We were a strange medley of regulars, raw troops, old farmers, preachers, school-boys, etc. But I believe that all present did their duty, only to find all the credit afterwards claimed, with a considerable degree of success, among the ignorant, by those who were not present.

“The credit of the command of our party belongs alone to Captain Fox, than whom there was no more chivalric spirit in either army. In making this statement, I am actuated only by a desire to do justice to the memory of one who was too unassuming to sound his own trumpet. I am also told, by soldiers, that Lieutenant Pollard deserves a considerable degree of credit for the part he played in following and harassing the enemy up to the time they took the right fork of the road near Butler’s Tavern.

“You are, of course, aware of the fact that the enemy has

always denied the authenticity of the Dahlgren Papers, and declared them to be *forgeries*. To prove the utter absurdity and falsehood of such a charge, I submit the following :

“ 1. The papers were taken by Littlepage from the person of a man whose name he had never heard. It was a dark night, and the captor, with the aid of the noon-day sun, could not write at all. I afterwards taught him to write a little in my school.

“ The question occurs : Can a boy who cannot write at all, write such papers, and sign to them an unknown name? If they had been forged by any one else, would they have been placed in the hands of a child? Could any one else have forged an unknown and unheard-of name?

“ 2. The papers were handed to me immediately after their capture, in the presence of gentlemen of undoubted integrity and veracity, before whom I can prove that the papers not only were not, but could not have been altered or interpolated by myself. These gentlemen were with me every moment of the time between my receiving the papers and my delivering them to Lieutenant Pollard.

“ 3. If Lieutenant Pollard had made any alterations in the papers, these would have been detected by every one who read the papers before they were given to him, and afterwards read them in the newspapers. But all agree that they were correctly copied. In short, human testimony cannot establish any fact more fully than the fact that Colonel Ulric Dahlgren was the author of the ‘Dahlgren Papers.’

“ With regard to the part taken by myself in this affair, I lay no claim to any credit. I do not write this version of the affair to gain notoriety. I have made it a rule not to mention my own name except in cases where I found that false impressions were being made upon the public mind. You know very well that my being Littlepage’s captain entitled me to claim the

capture of the papers for *myself*. But this I have never done. And, even when called upon by General Fitz Lee to give my affidavit to the authenticity of the papers, I wrote him word that Littlepage was the captor of them. In his letter to Lieutenant Pollard, which was forwarded to me, he asked, ‘Who is Captain Halbach?’ I replied, for myself, that I was nothing more than the humble captain of a company of schoolboys, and that if I deserved any credit, it was only so much as he might choose to give me for preserving the papers, when advised to destroy them, to avoid being captured with them in my possession, which, I was told, would result in the hanging of our little party.

“I have never-given the information herein contained before, because I had hoped that it would be given to the public by others, and I give it now, because I regard it as a duty to do so. My own course, after the killing of Dahlgren was as follows: I joined those who agreed to bury him decently in a coffin, and in compliance with a promise made to a scout by the name of Hogan, I prepared a neat little head-board with my own hands, to mark his grave. This was not put up, because the messenger from Mr. Davis came for the body of Dahlgren while we were taking it out of the ground where it had been hastily buried.

E

On page 29, I referred to the statement of the Honorable Montgomery Blair with reference to the command of the United States Army being offered to General Lee in 1861. The following extract contains the declarations referred to.

“Let me observe here: It was the fall of Sumter that produced on the instant the ordinance of secession and filled

Virginia with troops from the Gulf States to carry it before the people. Its effect upon ordinary men may be conceived by the influence it exerted over General Lee. My father was authorized by the President and Mr. Cameron, Secretary of War, to converse with General Lee and ascertain whether he would accept the command of our army in the field. The latter was written for and he met my father at my house, where they conversed for an hour or more. It was a few days before the ordinance was passed. General Lee concluded the conversation by saying: 'Secession was anarchy,' and added: 'if he owned the four million of slaves in the South' he would cheerfully sacrifice them to the Union; but he did not know how he could draw his sword on his native State. He said he would see General Scott on the subject before he decided. A committee from the Virginia Convention, while the General and my father conversed, were hunting for him through the city. They met on his leaving the house. He repaired with them to consult with the Convention, as I have since learned, about some mode of settlement. The fall of Sumter settled the question for him and the Convention."

F

Since writing the narrative of the Second Campaign in Northern Virginia, I have concluded to append the following dispatch from General Lee to the Confederate Government.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
October 23, 1863.

"GENERAL S. COOPER, A. & I. GENERAL:

"GENERAL—In advance of a detailed report, I have the honor to submit, for the information of the department, the following outline of the recent operations of this army:

“With the design of bringing on an engagement with the Federal army, which was encamped around Culpepper Court House, and extending thence to the Rapidan, this army crossed that river on the 9th instant, and advanced by way of Madison Court House. Our progress was necessarily slow, as the march was by circuitous and concealed roads, in order to avoid the observation of the enemy.

“General Fitz Lee, with his cavalry division and a detachment of infantry, remained to hold our lines south of the Rapidan. General Stuart, with Hampton’s division, moved on the right of the column. With a portion of his command he attacked the advance of the enemy near James City on the tenth, and drove them back towards Culpepper. Our main body arrived near that place on the eleventh instant, and discovered that the enemy had retreated towards the Rappahannock, removing or destroying his stores. We were compelled to halt during the rest of the day to provision the troops, but the cavalry, under General Stuart, continued to press the enemy’s rear-guard towards the Rappahannock. A large force of Federal cavalry in the mean time had crossed the Rapidan, after our movement began, but was repulsed by General Fitz Lee, and pursued towards Brandy Station.

“Near that place the commands of Stuart and Lee united on the afternoon of the eleventh, and after a severe engagement drove the enemy’s cavalry across the Rappahannock with heavy loss.

“On the morning of the twelfth, the army marched in two columns, with the design of reaching the Orange and Alexandria Railroad north of the river, and interrupting the retreat of the enemy.

“After a skirmish with some of the Federal cavalry at Jeffersonton, we reached the Rappahannock at Warrenton Springs in the afternoon, where the passage of the river was disputed by

cavalry and artillery. The enemy was quickly driven off by a detachment of our cavalry, aided by a small force of infantry and a battery. Early next morning (thirteenth) the march was resumed, and the two columns united at Warrenton in the afternoon, when another halt was made to supply the troops with provisions. The enemy fell back rapidly along the line of the railroad, and early on the fourteenth the pursuit was continued, a portion of the army moving by way of New Baltimore towards Bristoe Station, and the rest, accompanied by the main body of the cavalry, proceeded to the same point by Auburn Mills and Greenwich. Near the former place a skirmish took place between General Ewell's advance and the rear-guard of the enemy, which was forced back and rapidly pursued.

“The retreat of the enemy was conducted by several direct parallel roads, while our troops were compelled to march by difficult and circuitous routes. We were consequently unable to intercept him. General Hill arrived first at Bristoe Station, where his advance, consisting of two brigades, became engaged with a force largely superior in numbers, posted behind the railroad embankment. The particulars of the action have not been officially reported, but the brigades were repulsed with some loss, and five pieces of artillery, with a number of prisoners, captured. Before the rest of the troops could be brought up, and the position of the enemy ascertained, he retreated across Broad Run. The next morning he was reported to be fortifying beyond Bull Run, extending his line towards the Little River Turnpike.

“The vicinity of the intrenchments around Washington and Alexandria rendered it useless to turn his new position, as it was apparent that he could readily retire to them, and would decline an engagement unless attacked in his fortifications. A further advance was therefore deemed unnecessary; and, after destroying the railroad from Cub Run southwardly to the Rappahan-

nock, the army returned on the 18th to the line of that river, leaving the cavalry in the enemy's front.

“The cavalry of the latter advanced on the following day, and some skirmishing occurred at Buckland. General Stuart, with Hampton's division, retired slowly towards Warrenton, in order to draw the enemy in that direction, thus exposing his flank and rear to Gen. Lee, who moved from Auburn and attacked him near Buckland. As soon as Gen. Stuart heard the sound of Lee's guns, he turned upon the enemy, who, after a stubborn resistance, broke and fled in confusion, pursued by Gen. Stuart nearly to Haymarket, and by Gen. Lee to Gainsville. Here the Federal infantry was encountred, and after capturing a number of them during the night, the cavalry slowly retired before their advance on the following day. When the movement of the army from the Rapidan commenced, Gen. Imboden was instructed to advance down the Valley, and guard the gaps of the mountains on our left. This duty was well performed by that officer; and, on the 18th instant, he marched upon Charlestown, and succeeded, by a well-concerted plan, in surrounding the place and capturing nearly the whole force stationed there, with all their stores and transportation, only a few escaping to Harper's Ferry. The enemy advanced from that place in superior numbers to attack Gen. Imboden, who retired, bringing off his prisoners and captured property, his command suffering very little loss, and inflicting some damage upon the pursuing column. In the course of these operations two thousand four hundred and thirty-six prisoners were captured, including forty-one commissioned officers. Of the above number, four hundred and thirty-four were taken by Gen. Imboden.

“A more complete account, with a statement of our loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, will be forwarded as soon as the official reports have been received.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

G

The Gettysburg Campaign having been the turning-point of the war, and being still in many respects a matter of dispute between the North and the South, I have thought it best to call the reader's attention to the following outline report of General Lee.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
July 31, 1863.

“GENERAL S. COOPER, A. & I. GENERAL, RICHMOND, VA.

“GENERAL: I have the honor to submit the following outline of the recent operations of this army for the information of the Department:

“The position occupied by the enemy opposite Fredericksburg being one in which he could not be attacked to advantage, it was determined to draw him from it. The execution of this purpose embraced the relief of the Shenandoah Valley from the troops that had occupied the lower part of it during the winter and spring, and if practicable, the transfer of the scene of hostilities north of the Potomac.

“It was thought that the corresponding movements on the part of the enemy, to which those contemplated by us would probably give rise, might offer a fair opportunity to strike a blow at the army therein, commanded by General Hooker, and that in any event that army would be compelled to leave Virginia, and possibly to draw to its support troops designed to operate against other parts of the country. In this way it was supposed that the enemy's plan of campaign for the summer would be broken up, and part of the season of active operations be consumed in the

formation of new combinations, and the preparations that they would require.

“In addition to these advantages, it was hoped that other valuable results might be attained by military success.

“Actuated by these and other important considerations that may hereafter be presented, the movement began on the 3d of June. McLaws’ division of Longstreet’s corps left Fredericksburg for Culpepper Court House, and Hood’s division, which was encamped on the Rapidan, marched to the same place.

“They were followed on the 4th and 5th by Ewell’s corps, leaving that of A. P. Hill to occupy our lines at Fredericksburg.

“The march of these troops having been discovered by the enemy on the afternoon of the 5th, and the following day, he crossed a force, amounting to about one army corps, to the south side of the Rappahannock, on a ponton-bridge laid down near the mouth of Deep Run. General Hill disposed of his command to resist their advance; but as they seemed intended for the purpose of observation rather than attack, the movements in progress were not arrested.

“The forces of Longstreet and Ewell reached Culpepper Court House by the 8th, at which point the cavalry, under General Stuart, was also concentrated.

“On the 9th a large force of Federal cavalry, strongly supported by infantry, crossed the Rappahannock at Beverley’s and Kelley’s Fords, and attacked General Stuart. A severe engagement ensued, continuing from early in the morning until late in the afternoon, when the enemy was forced to recross the river with heavy loss, leaving four hundred prisoners, three pieces of artillery and several colors in our hands.

“General Jenkins, with his cavalry brigade, had been ordered to advance towards Winchester to coöperate with the infantry in

the proposed expedition into the Lower Valley, and at the same time General Imboden was directed, with his command, to make a demonstration in the direction of Romney, in order to cover the movement against Winchester, and prevent the enemy at that place from being reënforced by the troops on the line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Both of these officers were in position when General Ewell left Culpepper Court House on the 10th. Crossing the Shenandoah near Front Royal, he detached Rodes' division to Berryville, with instructions, after dislodging the force stationed there, to cut off the communication between Winchester and the Potomac. With the divisions of Early and Johnson, General Ewell advanced directly upon Winchester, driving the enemy into his works around the town on the 13th. On the same day the troops at Berryville fell back before General Rodes, retreating to Winchester. On the 14th General Early stormed the works at the latter place, and the whole army of General Milroy was captured or dispersed. Most of those who attempted to escape were intercepted and made prisoners by General Johnson. Their leader fled to Harper's Ferry with a small party of fugitives.

“General Rodes marched from Berryville to Martinsburg, entering the latter place on the 14th, where he took seven hundred prisoners, five pieces of artillery and a considerable quantity of stores. These operations cleared the Valley of the enemy, those at Harper's Ferry withdrawing to Maryland Heights. More than four thousand prisoners, twenty-nine pieces of artillery, two hundred and seventy wagons and ambulances, with four hundred horses, were captured, besides a large amount of military stores. Our loss was small. On the night that Ewell appeared at Winchester, the Federal troops in front of A. P. Hill at Fredericksburg recrossed the Rappahannock, and the next day disappeared behind the hills of Stafford.

“The whole army of General Hooker withdrew from the line of the Rappahannock, pursuing the roads near the Potomac, and no favorable opportunity was offered for attack. It seemed to be the purpose of General Hooker to take a position which would enable him to cover the approaches to Washington City. With a view to draw him farther from his base, and at the same time to cover the march of A. P. Hill, who, in accordance with instructions, left Fredericksburg for the Valley as soon as the enemy withdrew from his front, Longstreet moved from Culpepper Court House on the 15th, and advancing along the east side of the Blue Ridge, occupied Ashby’s and Snicker’s Gaps. His force had been augmented while at Culpepper by General Pickett, with three brigades of his division.

“The cavalry, under General Stuart, was thrown out in front of Longstreet to watch the enemy, now reported to be moving into Loudon. On the 17th his cavalry encountered two brigades of ours under General Stuart, near Aldie, and was driven back with loss. The next day the engagement was renewed, the Federal cavalry being strongly supported by infantry, and General Stuart was in turn compelled to retire.

“The enemy advanced as far as Upperville, and then fell back. In these engagements General Stuart took about four hundred prisoners, and a considerable number of horses and arms.

“In the meantime a part of General Ewell’s corps had entered Maryland, and the rest was about to follow. General Jenkins with his cavalry, who accompanied General Ewell, penetrated Pennsylvania as far as Chambersburg. As these demonstrations did not have the effect of causing the Federal army to leave Virginia, and as it did not seem disposed to advance upon the position held by Longstreet, the latter was withdrawn to the west side of the Shenandoah. General Hill having already reached the Valley.

“General Stuart was left to guard the passes of the mountains, and observe the movements of the enemy, whom he was instructed to harass and impede as much as possible, should he attempt to cross the Potomac. In that event, General Stuart was directed to move into Maryland, crossing the Potomac east or west of the Blue Ridge, as in his judgment should be best, and take position on the right of our column as it advanced.

“By the 24th the progress of Ewell rendered it necessary that the rest of the army should be in supporting distance, and Longstreet and Hill marched to the Potomac. The former crossed at Williamsport, and the latter at Shepherdstown. The columns reunited at Hagerstown, and advanced thence into Pennsylvania, encamping near Chambersburg on the 27th.

“No report had been received that the Federal army had crossed the Potomac, and the absence of the cavalry rendered it impossible to obtain accurate information. In order, however, to retain it on the east side of the mountains after it should enter Maryland, and thus leave open our communication with the Potomac through Hagerstown and Williamsport, General Ewell had been instructed to send a division eastward from Chambersburg to cross the South Mountains. Early's division was detached for this purpose, and proceeded as far east as York, while the remainder of the corps proceeded to Carlisle.

“General Imboden, in pursuance of the instructions previously referred to, had been actively engaged on the left of Gen. Ewell during the progress of the latter into Maryland. He had driven off the forces guarding the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, destroying all the important bridges on that route from Cumberland to Martinsburg, and seriously damaged the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

“He subsequently took position at Hancock; and after the arrival of Longstreet and Hill at Chambersburg, was directed to march by way of McConnellsburg to that place.

“Preparations were now made to advance upon Harrisburg; but on the night of the 29th information was received from a scout that the Federal army, having crossed the Potomac, was advancing northwards, and that the head of the column had reached the South Mountains. As our communications with the Potomac were thus menaced, it was resolved to prevent his further progress in that direction by concentrating our army on the east side of the mountains. Accordingly, Longstreet and Hill were directed to proceed from Chambersburg to Gettysburg, to which point Gen. Ewell was also instructed to march from Carlisle.

“Gen. Stuart continued to follow the movements of the Federal army south of the Potomac after our own had entered Maryland, and in his efforts to impede its progress, advanced as far eastward as Fairfax Court House. Finding himself unable to delay the enemy materially, he crossed the river at Seneca, and marched through Westminster to Carlisle, where he arrived after Gen. Ewell had left for Gettysburg. By the route he pursued, the Federal army was interposed between his command and our main body, preventing any communication with him until his arrival at Carlisle.

“The march toward Gettysburg was conducted more slowly than it would have been had the movements of the Federal army been known.

“The leading division of Hill met the enemy in advance of Gettysburg, on the morning of the 1st of July. Driving back these troops to within a short distance of the town, he there encountered a larger force, with which two of his divisions became engaged. Ewell, coming up with two of his divisions by the Heildersburg road, joined in the engagement. The enemy were driven through Gettysburg with heavy loss, including about five thousand prisoners and several pieces of artillery.

“He retired to a high range of hills south and east of the

town. The attack was not pressed that afternoon, the enemy's force being unknown, and it being considered advisable to await the arrival of the rest of our troops.

“Orders were sent to hasten their march, and in the meantime every effort was made to ascertain the numbers and position of the enemy, and find the most favorable point of attack. It had not been intended to fight a general battle at such a distance from our base, unless attacked by the enemy; but finding ourselves unexpectedly confronted by the Federal army, it became a matter of difficulty to withdraw through the mountains with our large trains. At the same time the country was unfavorable for collecting supplies while in the presence of the enemy's main body, as he was enabled to restrain our foraging parties, by occupying the passes of the mountains with regular and local troops. A battle thus became, in a measure, unavoidable. Encouraged by the successful issue of the engagement of the first day, and in view of the valuable results that would ensue from the defeat of the army of Gen. Meade, it was thought advisable to renew the attack.

“The remainder of Ewell's and Hill's corps having arrived, and two divisions of Longstreet's, our preparations were made accordingly. During the afternoon intelligence was received of the arrival of General Stuart at Carlisle, and he was ordered to march to Gettysburg and take position on the left. A full account of these engagements cannot be given until the reports of the several commanding officers shall have been received, and I shall only offer a general description.

“The preparations for attack were not completed until the afternoon of the second.

“The enemy held a high and commanding ridge along which he had massed a large amount of artillery. General Ewell occupied the left of our line, General Hill the centre, and General Longstreet the right. In front of General Longstreet the en-

emy held a position, from which, if he could be driven, it was thought that our army could be used to advantage in assailing the more elevated ground beyond, and thus enable us to reach the crest of the ridge. That officer was directed to endeavor to carry this position, while General Ewell attacked directly the high ground on the enemy's right, which had already been partially fortified. General Hill was instructed to threaten the centre of the Federal line, in order to prevent reënforcements being sent to either wing, and to avail himself of any opportunity that might present itself to attack.

“After a severe struggle Longstreet succeeded in getting possession of and holding the desired ground. Ewell also carried some of the strong positions which he assailed, and the result was such as to lead to the belief that he would ultimately be able to dislodge the enemy. The battle ceased at dark.

“These partial successes determined me to continue the assault next day. Pickett, with three of his brigades, joined Longstreet the following morning, and our batteries were moved forward to the position gained by him the day before.

“The general plan of attack was unchanged, except that one division and two brigades of Hill's corps were ordered to support Longstreet.

“The enemy, in the meantime, had strengthened his line with earthworks. The morning was occupied in necessary preparations, and the battle recommenced in the afternoon of the third, and raged with great violence until sunset. Our troops succeeded in entering the advanced works of the enemy, and getting possession of some of his batteries; but our artillery having nearly expended its ammunition, the attacking columns became exposed to the heavy fire of the numerous batteries near the summit of the ridge, and, after a most determined and gallant struggle, were compelled to relinquish their advantage and fall back to their original positions, with severe loss.

“The conduct of the troops was all that I could desire or expect, and they deserved success so far as it can be deserved by heroic valor and fortitude. More may have been required of them than they were able to perform, but my admiration of their noble qualities, and confidence in their ability to cope successfully with the enemy, has suffered no abatement from the issue of this protracted and sanguinary conflict.

“Owing to the strength of the enemy’s position and the reduction of our ammunition, a renewal of the engagement could not be hazarded, and the difficulty of procuring supplies rendered it impossible to continue longer where we were. Such of the wounded as were in condition to be removed, and part of the arms collected on the field, were ordered to Williamsport. The army remained at Gettysburg during the fourth, and at night began to retire by the road to Fairfield, carrying with it about four thousand prisoners. Nearly two thousand had previously been paroled, but the enemy’s numerous wounded that had fallen into our hands after the first and second day’s engagements were left behind.

“Little progress was made that night, owing to a severe storm which greatly embarrassed our movements. The rear of the column did not leave its position near Gettysburg until after daylight on the fifth.

“The march was continued during that day without interruption by the enemy, except an unimportant demonstration upon our rear in the afternoon, when near Fairfield, which was easily checked. Part of our train moved by the road through Fairfield, and the rest by the way of Cashtown, guarded by General Imboden. In passing through the mountains, in advance of the column, the great length of the trains exposed them to attack by the enemy’s cavalry, which captured a number of wagons and ambulances, but they succeeded in reaching Williamsport without serious loss.

“They were attacked at that place on the 6th by the enemy’s cavalry, which was gallantly repulsed by General Imboden. The attacking force was subsequently encountered and driven off by General Stuart, and pursued for several miles in the direction of Boonsboro. The army, after an arduous march, rendered more difficult by the rains, reached Hagerstown on the afternoon of the 6th and morning of the 7th July.

“The Potomac was found to be so much swollen by the rains that had fallen, almost incessantly since our entrance into Maryland, as to be unfordable. Our communications with the south side were thus interrupted, and it was difficult to procure either ammunition or subsistence, the latter difficulty being enhanced by the high waters impeding the working of the neighboring mills. The trains with the wounded and prisoners were compelled to await at Williamsport the subsiding of the river and the construction of boats, as the ponton-bridge left at Falling Waters had been partially destroyed. The enemy had not yet made his appearance; but as he was in condition to obtain large reinforcements, and our situation, for the reasons above mentioned, was becoming daily more embarrassing, it was deemed advisable to recross the river. Part of the ponton-bridge was recovered, and new boats built, so that by the 13th a good bridge was thrown over the river at Falling Waters.

“The enemy in force reached our front on the 12th. A position had been previously selected to cover the Potomac from Williamsport to Falling Waters, and an attack was awaited during that and the succeeding day. This did not take place, though the two armies were in close proximity, the enemy being occupied in fortifying his own lines. Our preparations being completed, and the river, though still deep, being pronounced fordable, the army commenced to withdraw to the south side on the night of the 13th.

“Ewell’s corps forded the river at Williamsport, those of

Longstreet and Hill crossed upon the bridge. Owing to the condition of the roads the troops did not reach the bridge until after daylight on the 14th; and the crossing was not completed until 1 P. M., when the bridge was removed. The enemy offered no serious interruption, and the movement was attended with no loss of material except a few disabled wagons, and two pieces of artillery, which the horses were unable to move through the deep mud. Before fresh horses could be sent back for them the rear of the column had passed.

“During the slow and tedious march to the bridge, in the midst of a violent storm of rain, some of the men lay down by the way to rest. Officers sent back for them failed to find many in the obscurity of the night, and these, with some stragglers, fell into the hands of the enemy.

“Brigadier-General Pettigrew was mortally wounded in an attack made by a small body of cavalry, which was unfortunately mistaken for our own and permitted to enter our lines. He was brought to Bunker Hill, where he expired a few days afterwards. He was a brave and accomplished officer and gentleman, and his loss will be deeply felt by the country and the army.

“The following day the army marched to Bunker Hill, in the vicinity of which it encamped for several days. The day after its arrival, a large force of the enemy's cavalry, which had crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry, advanced towards Martinsburg. It was attacked by General Fitz Lee, near Kearneysville, and defeated with heavy loss, leaving its dead and many of its wounded on the field.

“Owing to the swollen condition of the Shenandoah River, the plan of operations which had been contemplated when we recrossed the Potomac could not be put in execution, and before the waters had subsided the movements of the enemy induced me to cross the Blue Ridge and take position south of the Rappahannock; which was accordingly done.

“As soon as the reports of the commanding officers shall be received, a more detailed account of these operations will be given, and occasion will then be taken to speak more particularly of the conspicuous gallantry and good conduct of both officers and men.

“It is not yet in my power to give a correct statement of our casualties, which were severe, including many brave men, and an unusual proportion of distinguished and valuable officers. Among them, I regret to mention the following general officers: Major-Generals Hood, Pender and Trimble severely, and Major-General Heth slightly wounded.

“General Pender has since died. This lamented officer has borne a distinguished part in every engagement of this army, and was wounded on several occasions while leading his command with conspicuous gallantry and ability. The confidence and admiration inspired by his courage and capacity as an officer were only equalled by the esteem and respect entertained by all with whom he was associated, for the noble qualities of his modest and unassuming character. Brigadier-Generals Barksdale and Garnett were killed, and Brigadier-General Semmes mortally wounded while leading their troops with the courage that always distinguished them. These brave officers and patriotic gentlemen fell in the faithful discharge of duty, leaving the army to mourn their loss and emulate their noble examples.

“Brigadier-Generals Kemper, Armistead, Scales, G. T. Anderson, Hampton, J. M. Jones and Jenkins, were also wounded. Brigadier-General Archer was taken prisoner. General Pettigrew, though wounded at Gettysburg, continued in command until he was mortally wounded near Falling Waters.

“The loss of the enemy is unknown, but from observations on the field, and his subsequent movements, it is supposed that he suffered severely.

Respectfully submitted,

R. E. LEE, *General.*”

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I closed the narrative of the life of General Lee with his return to his home after the surrender of his army. But as everything connected with his career is of great interest to the country, I have been induced to notice here the last of his public acts—namely, his inauguration as the President of Washington College, and his testimony before the Reconstruction Committee of the Congress of the United States.

The former event occurred on the 2nd of October 1865, and is thus described in a letter from a gentleman who was present :

“ General Robert E. Lee was to-day installed President of Washington College. There was no pomp or parade. The exercises of installation were the simplest possible—an exact and barren compliance with the required formula of taking the oath by the new President, and nothing more. This was in accordance with the special request of General Lee. It was proposed to have the installation take place in the college chapel, to send invitations far and wide, to have a band of music to play enlivening airs, to have young girls, robed in white and bearing chaplets of flowers, to sing songs of welcome, to have congratulatory speeches, to make it a holiday. That this proposed programme was not carried out was a source of severe disappointment to many. But General Lee had expressed his wishes contrary to the choice and determination of the college trustees and the multitude, and his wishes were complied with.

“ The installation took place at nine A. M. in a recitation room of the college. In this room were seated the faculty and the students, the ministers of the town churches, a magistrate and the county clerk, the last two officials being necessary to the

ceremonial. General Lee was inducted into the room by the Board of Trustees. At his entrance and introduction all in the room rose, bowed and then became seated. Prayer by Rev. Dr. White, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, directly followed. To me it was a noticeable fact, and perhaps worthy of record, that he prayed for the President of the United States. Altogether it was a most fitting and impressive prayer.

“The prayer ended, Judge Brockenbrough, chairman of the Board of Trustees, stated the object of their coming together, to install General Lee as President of Washington College. He felt the serious dignity of the occasion, but it was a seriousness and dignity that should be mingled with heartfelt joy and gladness. Passing a brief eulogy upon General Lee, and congratulating the board and college, and its present and future students, on having obtained one so loved and great and worthy to preside over the college, he said he could say a great deal more, had it not been voted against speech-making. During the delivery of these few words, — and they came, despite of the prohibitory voting, very near culminating to the dignity of a set as well as eloquent speech, — General Lee remained standing, his arms quietly folded, and calmly and steadfastly looking into the eyes of the speaker. Justice William White, at the instance of Judge Brockenborough now administered the oath of office to General Lee. For the benefit of those curious to know the nature of this new oath, to which General Lee has just subscribed, and as it is brief, I will give it entire. It is as follows : —

“ ‘ I do swear, that I will, to the best of my skill and judgment, faithfully and truly discharge the duties required of me by an act entitled “ An act for the incorporating the rector and trustees of Liberty Hall Academy,” without favor, affection or partiality, So help me God.’

“ To this oath General Lee at once affixed his signature, with the accompanying usual jurat of the swearing magistrate ap-

pended. Those inquisitive enough to seek further light than that revealed in the copied oath, can look at the act therein referred to, and, when found, make a note of it. The document, in the form stated, was handed to the County Clerk for safe and perpetual custodianship, and at the same time the keys of the College were given up by the Rector into the keeping of the new President. A congratulatory shaking of hands followed, and wound up the day's brief but pleasing, impressive, and memorable ceremonial. President Lee and those of the trustees present, with the faculty, now passed into the room set apart for the former's use, — a good sized room, newly but very tastefully furnished.

“General Lee was dressed in a plain but elegant suit of gray. His appearance indicated the enjoyment of good health, — better, I should say, than when he surrendered his army at Appomattox Court House, the first and only occasion, before the present, of my having seen him.”

In the early part of the year 1866, General Lee was summoned to Washington by the Congressional Committee on Reconstruction, with which summons he promptly complied. The following examination then took place.

GENERAL LEE'S TESTIMONY.

General Robert E. Lee, sworn and examined by Mr. Howard.

Question — Where is your present residence? Answer — Lexington, Virginia.

Q. How long have you resided in Lexington? A. Since the first of October last, nearly five months.

Q. Are you acquainted with the state of feeling among what we call secessionists, in Virginia, at present, toward the Government of the United States? A. I do not know that I

am. I have been living very retired, and have had but little communication with politicians ; I know nothing more than from my own observation, and from such facts as have come to my knowledge.

Q. From your observation what is your opinion of the feeling of loyalty towards the Government of the United States among the secession portion of the people of that State at this time? A. So far as has come to my knowledge I do not know of a single person who either feels or contemplates any resistance to the Government of the United States, or, indeed, any opposition to it. No word has reached me to either purport.

Q. From what you have observed among them is it your opinion that they are friendly toward the Government of the United States, and that they will coöperate to sustain and uphold the Government for the future? A. I believe that they entirely acquiesce in the Government of the United States, and, so far as I have heard any one express an opinion, they are for coöperating with President Johnson in his policy.

Q. In his policy in regard to what? A. His policy in regard to the restoration of the whole country. I have heard persons with whom I have conversed express great confidence in the wisdom of his policy of restoration, and they seem to look forward to it as a hope of restoration.

Q. How do they feel in regard to that portion of the people of the United States who have been forward and zealous in the prosecution of the war against the rebellion? A. Well, I don't know. I have heard nobody express any opinion in regard to it. As I said before, I have not had much communication with politicians in the country, if there are any. Every one seems to be engaged in his own affairs and endeavoring to restore the civil Government of the State. I have heard no expressions of a sentiment towards any particular portion of the country.

Q. How do the secessionists feel in regard to the payment

of the debt of the United States, contracted in the prosecution of the war? A. I have never heard any one speak on the subject. I suppose they must expect to pay the taxes levied by the Government. I have heard them speak in reference to the payment of taxes, and of their efforts to raise money to pay the taxes, which I suppose are for their share of the debt. I have never heard any one speak in opposition to the payment of the taxes, or resistance to their payment. Their whole effort has been to try and raise the money for the payment of their taxes.

Q. From your knowledge of the state of the public feeling in Virginia, is it your opinion that the people would, if the question were left to them, repudiate and reject that debt? A. I never heard any one speak on the subject, but from my knowledge of the people, I believe they would be in favor of the payment of all just debts.

Q. Do they in your opinion regard that as a just debt? A. I do not know what their opinion is on the subject of that particular debt. I have never heard any opinion expressed contrary to it. Indeed, as I said in the beginning, I have had very little discussion or intercourse with the people. I believe the people will pay the debts they are called upon to pay. I say that from my knowledge of the people generally.

Q. Would they pay that debt, or their portion of it, with as much alacrity as people ordinarily pay their taxes to their Government? A. I do not know that they would make any distinction between the two. The taxes laid by the Government, so far as I know, they are prepared to pay to the best of their ability. I never heard them make any distinction.

Q. What is the feeling of that portion of the people of Virginia in regard to the payment of the so-called Confederate debt? A. I believe, so far as my opinion goes, — I have no facts to go upon, but merely base my opinion on the knowledge I have of the people, — that they would be willing to pay the Confederate debt, too.

Q. You think they would? A. I think they would if they had the power and ability to do so. I have never heard of any one of the State with whom I have conversed speak of repudiating any debt.

Q. I suppose the Confederate is almost entirely valueless even in the markets in Virginia? A. Entirely so far as I know. I believe the people generally look upon it as lost entirely. I never heard any question on the subject.

Q. Do you recollect the terms of the Confederate bonds — when they were made payable? A. I think I have a general recollection that they were made payable six months after a declaration of peace.

Q. Six months after the ratification of a treaty of peace between the United States and the Confederate Government? A. I think they ran that way.

Q. So that the bonds are not due yet by their terms? A. I suppose, unless it is considered that there is a peace now, they are not due.

Q. How do the people in Virginia, secessionists more particularly, feel towards the freedmen? A. Every one with whom I associate express the kindest feelings towards the freedmen. They wish to see them get on in the world and particularly to take up some occupation for a living and to turn their hands to some work. I know that efforts have been made among the farmers near where I live to induce them to engage for the year at regular wages.

Q. Do you think there is a willingness on the part of their old masters to give them fair living wages for their labor? A. I believe it is so. The farmers generally prefer those servants who have been living with them before. I have heard them express their preference for the men whom they know, who had lived with them before, and their wish to get them to return to work.

Q. Are you aware of the existence of any combination among the whites to keep down the wages of the blacks? A. I am not. I have heard that in several counties the land owners have met in order to establish a uniform rate of wages, but I never heard, nor do I know, of any combination to keep down wages or establish any rate which they did not think fair. The means of paying wages in Virginia are very limited. Now and then there is a difference of opinion as to how much each person is able to pay.

Q. How do they feel in regard to the education of the blacks? Is there a general willingness to have them educated? A. Where I am and have been the people have exhibited a willingness that the blacks should be educated, and they express an opinion that it would be better for the blacks and for the whites.

Q. General, you are very competent to judge of the capacity of black men for acquiring knowledge. I want your opinion on that capacity as compared with the capacity of white men? A. I do not know that I am particularly qualified to speak on that subject, as you seem to intimate, but I do not think the black man is as capable of acquiring knowledge as the white man. There are some more apt than others. I have known some to acquire knowledge and skill in their trade or profession. I have had servants of my own who learned to read and write very well.

Q. Do they show a capacity to obtain knowledge of mathematics and the exact sciences? A. I have no knowledge on that subject. I am merely acquainted with those who have learned the common rudiments of education.

Q. General, are you aware of the existence among the blacks of Virginia, anywhere within the limits of the State, of combinations having in view the disturbance of the peace or any improper and unlawful acts? A. I am not. I have seen no

evidence of it, and have heard of none. Wherever I have been, they are quiet and orderly, not disposed to work, or, rather, not disposed to any continuous engagement to work, but just very short jobs to provide them with the immediate means of subsistence.

Q. Has the colored race generally as great love of money and property as the white race possesses? A. I do not think it has. The blacks with whom I am acquainted look more to the present time than to the future.

Q. Does that absence of a lust of money and property arise more from the nature of the negro than from his former servile condition? A. Well, it may be in some measure attributed to his former condition. They are an amiable, sociable race. They like their ease and comfort, and I think look more to their present than their future condition.

Q. In the event of a war between the United States and any foreign power, such as England or France, if there should be held out to the secession portion of the people of Virginia or the other recently rebel States a fair prospect of gaining their independence and shaking off the Government of the United States, is it or is it not your opinion that they would avail themselves of that opportunity? A. I cannot speak with any certainty on that point. I do not know how far they might be actuated by their feelings. I have nothing whatever to base the opinion upon. So far as I know, they contemplate nothing of the kind now. What may happen in the future I cannot say.

Q. Do you not frequently hear in your intercourse with secessionists in Virginia expressions of a hope that such a war may break out? A. I cannot say that I have; on the contrary, I have heard persons — I do not know whether you would call them secessionists or not, I mean those people in Virginia with whom I associate — express the hope that the country may not be led into a war.

Q. In such an event do you not think that class of people whom I call secessionists would join the common enemy? A. It is possible; it depends upon the feelings of the individual.

Q. If it is a fair question,—you may answer or not as you choose,—what in such an event might be your own choice? A. I have no disposition now to do it, and I never have had.

Q. And you cannot foresee that such would be your inclination in such an event? A. No, I can only judge from the past; I do not know what circumstances it may produce. I cannot pretend to foresee events. So far as I know the feeling of the people of Virginia, they wish for peace.

Q. During the civil war was it not contemplated by the Government of the Confederacy to form an alliance with some foreign nation if possible? A. I believe it was their wish to do so if they could. It was their wish to have the Confederate Government recognized as an independent Government. I have no doubt that if it could have made favorable treaties it would have done so, but I know nothing of the policy of the Government. I had no hand or part in it. I merely express my own opinion.

Q. The question I am about to put to you, you may answer or not, as you choose. Did you take an oath of fidelity or allegiance to the Confederate Government? A. I do not recollect having done so, but it is possible that when I was commissioned I did. I do not recollect whether it was required. If it was required I took it, or if it had been required I would have taken it, but I do not recollect whether it was or not.

By Mr. Blow.

Q. In reference to the effect of President Johnson's policy, if it were adopted, would there be anything like a return of the old feeling? I ask that because you used the expression "acquiescing in the result." A. I believe it would take time for

the feelings of the people to be of that cordial nature to the Government that they were formerly.

Q. Do you think their preference for that policy arises from a desire to have peace and good feeling in the country, or from the probability of their regaining political power? A. So far as I know the desire of the people of the South, it is for the restoration of their civil government, and they look upon the policy of President Johnson as the one which would most clearly and most surely reëstablish it.

Q. Do you see any change among the poorer classes in Virginia in reference to their industry? Are they as much or more interested in developing their material prosperity than they were? A. I have not observed any change. Every one now has to attend to his business for his support.

Q. The poorer classes are generally hard at work, are they? A. So far as I know, they are; I know nothing to the contrary.

Q. Is there any difference in their relations to the colored people? Is their prejudice increased or diminished? A. I have noticed no change. So far as I know the feelings of all the people of Virginia, they are kind to the colored people. I have never heard any blame attributed to them as to the present condition of things or any responsibility.

Q. There are very few colored laborers employed, I suppose? A. Those who own farms have employed more or less — one or two colored laborers. Some are so poor that they have to work themselves.

Q. Can capitalists and working men from the North go into any portion of Virginia with which you are familiar and go to work among the people? A. I do not know of anything to prevent their peace and pleasure there. It would depend very much on their conduct. If they confined themselves to their own business, and did not interfere to provoke controversies with their neighbors, I do not believe they would be molested.

Q. There is no desire to keep out labor and capital? A. Not that I know of. On the contrary, they are very anxious to get capital into the State.

Q. You see nothing of a disposition to prevent such a thing? A. I have seen nothing, and do not know of anything, as I said before. The manner in which they would be received would depend entirely upon the individuals themselves. They might make themselves obnoxious, as you can understand.

By Mr. Howard.

Q. Is there not a general dislike of Northern men among secessionists? A. I suppose they would prefer not to associate with them. I do not know that they would select them as associates.

Q. Do they avoid and ostracize some socially? A. They might avoid them. They would not select them as associates unless there was some reason. I do not know that they would associate with them until they became acquainted. I think it probable they would not admit them into their social circles.

By Mr. Blow.

Q. What is the position of the colored men in Virginia with reference to the persons they work for? Do you think they would prefer to work for Northern or Southern men? A. I think it very probable they would prefer the Northern men, although I have no facts to go upon.

Q. That having been stated very frequently in reference to the Cotton States, does it result from bad treatment on the part of the resident population, or from the idea that they will be more fairly treated by the new comers? What is your observation in that respect in regard to Virginians? A. I have no means of forming an opinion; I do not know any case in Virginia. I know of numbers of the blacks engaging with their

old masters, and I know of many to prefer to go off and look for new homes. Whether it is from any dislike of their former masters, or from any desire to change, or they feel more free and independent, I don't know.

Q. What is your opinion in regard to the material interests of Virginia? Do you think they will be equal to what they were before the rebellion, under the changed aspect of affairs?

A. It will take a long time for them to reach their former standard. I think that after some years they will reach it, and I hope exceed it, but it cannot be immediately, in my opinion.

Q. It will take a number of years? A. It will take a number of years, I think.

Q. On the whole, the condition of things in Virginia is hopeful, both in regard to its material interests and the future peace of the country? A. I have heard great hope expressed, and there is a great cheerfulness and willingness to labor.

Q. Do you think that that is the main idea with them, or that they merely look to it, as you say, as the best means of restoring the civil government and the peace and prosperity of their respective States? A. As to the first point you make, I do not know that I ever heard any person speak upon it. I never heard the points separated. I have heard them speak generally as to the effect of the policy of President Johnson. The feeling is, so far as I know now, that there is not that equality extended to the Southern States which is enjoyed by the North.

Q. You do not feel down there that while you accept the result we are as generous as we ought to be under the circumstances? A. They think that the North can afford to be generous.

Q. That is the feeling down there? A. Yes; and they think it is the best policy — those who reflect upon the subject and are able to judge.

Q. I understand it to be your opinion that generosity and liberality towards the entire South would be the surest means of regaining their good opinion? A. Yes, and the speediest.

By Mr. Howard.

Q. I understand you to say generally that you had no apprehension of any combination among the leading secessionists to renew the war or anything of the kind? A. I have no reason in the world to think so.

Q. Have you heard that subject talked over among any of the politicians? A. No, sir, I have not. I have not heard that matter even suggested.

Q. Let me put another hypothetical state of things. Suppose the Executive Government of the United States should be held by a President, who, like Mr. Buchanan, rejected the right of coercion, and suppose a Congress should exist here entertaining the same political opinions, thus presenting to the once rebel States the opportunity to again secede from the Union, would they or would they not, in your opinion, avail themselves of that opportunity, or some of them? A. I suppose it would depend upon the circumstances existing at the time. If their feelings should remain embittered and their affections alienated from the rest of the States, I think it very probable they might do so, provided they thought it was to their interest.

Q. Do you not think that at the present time there is a deep seated feeling of dislike toward the Government of the United States on the part of the masses of the secessionists? A. I do not know that there is any deep seated dislike. I think it is probable that there may be some animosity still existing among the people of the South.

Q. Is there not a deep seated feeling of disappointment and chagrin at the result of the war? A. I think, that at the time, they were disappointed at the result of the war.

Q. Do you mean to be understood as saying there is not a condition of discontent against the Government of the United States among the secessionists generally? A. I know of none.

Q. Are you prepared to say they respect the Government of the United States and the loyal people of the United States so much at the present time as to perform their duties as citizens of the United States and of the States faithfully and well? A. I believe that they will perform all the duties that they are required to perform. I think that is the general feeling so far as I know.

Q. Suppose this policy of President Johnson should be all you anticipate and that you should also realize all that you expect in the improvement of the material interests, do you think that the result of that will be the gradual restoration of the old feeling? A. That will be the natural result I think, and I see no other way in which that result can be brought about. The friends of the policy in the South adopt it because they see in it the means of repairing the political position, which they lost in the recent contest.

Q. Do you think it would be practicable to convict a man in Virginia of treason for having taken part in this rebellion against the Government, by a Virginia jury, without picking it with direct reference to a verdict of guilty? A. On that point I have no knowledge, and I do not know what they would consider treason against the United States, if you refer to past acts.

Mr. Howard.—Yes, sir. A. I have no knowledge what their views on that subject in the past are.

Q. You understand my question? Suppose a jury was empanelled in your own neighborhood, taken by lot, would it be possible to convict, for instance, Jeff. Davis, for having levied war upon the United States, and thus having committed the

crime of treason? A. I think it is very probable that they would not consider he had committed treason.

Q. Suppose the jury should be clearly and plainly instructed by the Court that such an act of war upon the part of Mr. Davis or any other leading man constituted in itself the crime of treason under the Constitution of the United States, would the jury be likely to heed that instruction, and, if the facts were plainly before them, commit the offender? A. I do not know, sir, what they would do on that question.

Q. They do not generally suppose that it was treason against the United States, do they? A. I do not think that they so consider it.

Q. In what light would they view it; what would be the excuse or justification? how would they escape in their own mind? I refer to the past. I am referring to the past and the feelings they would have? A. So far as I know, they look upon the action of the State in withdrawing itself from the Government of the United States as carrying the individuals of the State along with it; that the State was responsible for the act, not the individuals, and that the ordinance of secession, so called, or those acts of the State which recognized a condition of war between the State and the General Government, stood as their justification for their bearing arms against the Government of the United States. Yes, sir; I think they would consider the act of the State as legitimate; that they were merely using the reserved rights, which they had a right to do.

Q. State, if you please, and if you are disinclined to answer the question you need not do so, what your own personal views on that question are. A. That was my view, that the act of Virginia, in withdrawing herself from the United States, carried me along as a citizen of Virginia, and that her laws and her acts were binding on me. Q. All that you felt to be your justification in taking the course you did? A. Yes, sir.

Q. I have been told, General, that you have remarked to some of your friends in conversation that you were rather wheedled or cheated into that course by politicians. A. I do not recollect making any such remark. I do not think I ever made it.

Q. If there is any other matter about which you wish to speak on this occasion, do so freely. A. Only in reference to that last question you put me. I may have said and may have believed that the positions of the two sections which they held to each other was brought about by the politicians of the country; that the great masses of the people, if they understood the real question, would have avoided it, but not that I had been individually wheedled by the politicians.

Q. That is probably the origin of the whole thing? A. I may have said that, but I do not recollect it; but I did believe at the time that it was an unnecessary condition of affairs, and might have been avoided if forbearance and wisdom had been practised on both sides.

Q. You say you do not recollect having sworn allegiance and fidelity to the Confederate Government? A. I do not recollect it, nor do I know that it was ever required. I was regularly commissioned in the army of the Confederate States, but I do not really recollect that an oath was required. If it was required I have no doubt I took it, or if it had been required I would have taken it.

Q. Is there any other matter which you desire to state to the committee? A. No sir. I am ready to answer any question which you think proper to put to me.

Q. How would an amendment to the Constitution be received by the secessionists or by the people at large, allowing the colored people or certain classes of them to exercise the right of voting at elections? A. I think, so far as I can form an opinion, in such an event, they would object.

Q. They would object to such an arrangement? A. Yes sir.

Q. Suppose an amendment nevertheless be adopted conferring upon the blacks the right of suffrage, would that, in your opinion, lead to scenes of violence or breaches of the peace between the two races in Virginia? A. I think it would excite unfriendly feelings between the two races. I cannot pretend to say to what extent it would go, but that would be the result.

Q. Are you acquainted with the proposed amendment now pending in the United States Senate? A. No, sir, I am not; I scarcely ever read a paper. (The substance of the proposed amendment was explained to the witness by Mr. Conklin.) So far as I can see, I do not think that the State of Virginia would object to it.

Q. Would she consent under any circumstances to allow the black people to vote, even if she were to gain a larger number of representatives in Congress? A. That would depend upon her interests. If she had the right of determining that, I do not see why she would object if it were to her interest to admit those people to vote; that might overrule any other objections that she had to it.

Q. What in your opinion would be the practical result? Do you think that Virginia will consent to allow the negroes to vote? A. I think that at present she would accept the smaller representation. I do not know what the future may develop. If it shall be plain to her that these persons will vote properly and understandingly she might admit them to vote.

By Mr. Blow.

Q. Do you not think it would turn a good deal in the Cotton States upon the value of the labor of the black people, upon the amount which they produced? A. In a good many States in the South, and in a good many counties in Virginia, if the

black people were allowed to vote, it would, I think, exclude representation that is proper. Intelligent people would not be elected, and rather than suffer that injury they would not let them vote at all.

Q. Do you not think that the question as to whether any Southern States would allow the colored people the right of suffrage in order to increase representation, would depend a good deal on the amount which the colored people might contribute to the wealth of the State, in order to secure two things, first the larger representation, and second the influence derived from these persons voting? A. I think they would determine the question more in reference to their opinion as to the manner in which these votes would be exercised, whether they consider those people qualified to vote. My own opinion is that at this time they cannot vote intelligently, and that giving them the right of suffrage would open the door to a good deal of demagoguism and lead to embarrassments in various ways. What the future may prove, how intelligent they may become, with what eyes they may look upon the interests of the State in which they may reside, I cannot say more than you can.

Q. Is there any sympathy felt in the South with the schemes of emigration to Mexico? A. I believe that the mass of the people have not any sympathy with them. There are individuals who think their interests would be benefited and indeed that their prospects at home are so poor now that it is like losing their lives to remain. That feeling was stronger at the first cessation of hostilities than it is at this time. It seems to be subsiding.

By Mr. Howard.

Q. I will put one question to you, which you may respond to or not as you please. I wish to inquire whether you had any knowledge, while you were in command at Richmond, of

the cruelties practised toward the Union prisoners at Libby Prison and on Belle Isle? A. I never knew that any cruelty was practised, and I have no reason to believe that it was practised. I can believe, and have reason to believe, that privations may have been experienced by the prisoners, because I know that provisions and shelter could not be provided for them.

Q. Were you not aware that the prisoners were dying from cold and starvation? A. I was not.

Mr. Howard—I desire that you will speak your mind fully and freely on this subject, for it is useless to conceal from you the fact that there seems to have been created a sad feeling in the hearts of the people at the North. A. As regards myself, I never had any control over the prisoners, except those that were captured on the field of battle, when it was then my business to send them to Richmond to the proper officer who was then the provost-marshal-general. In regard to their disposition afterwards I had no control. I never gave any order about it. It was entirely in the hands of the War Department.

Q. And not in your hands? A. And not in mine.

Q. Did these scenes come to your knowledge at all? A. Never. No report was ever made to me about them. There was no call for any to be made to me. I did hear, it was mere hearsay, that statements had been made to the War Department, and that everything had been done to relieve them that could be done, even finally so far as to offer to send them to some other points. Charleston was one point named, if they would be received by the United States authorities and taken to their homes; but whether this is true or not I do not know. It was merely a report that I heard.

Q. Were you in the same ignorance of the scenes at Andersonville and Salisbury? A. I never knew the commandant at Andersonville until I saw by the papers, after the cessation of

hostilities, that Captain Wirz had been arrested on that account, nor do I know now who commanded at Salisbury.

Q. And of course you know nothing of the scenes of cruelty, about which complaints have been made at those places? A. Nothing in the world, as I said before. I suppose they suffered from the want of ability on the part of the Confederate States to supply their wants. At the very beginning of the war I knew that there was suffering of prisoners on both sides, but as far as I could I did everything in my power to relieve them, and to establish the cartel which was established.

By Mr. Blow.

Q. It has been frequently asserted that the Confederate soldiers feel more kindly towards the Government of the United States than other persons or other people of the South. What are your observations on that point? A. From the Confederate soldiers I have heard no expression of any other opinion. They looked upon the war as a necessary evil and went through it. I have seen them relieve the wants of Federal soldiers on the field. The orders always were that the whole field should be treated alike. Parties were sent out to take the Federal wounded as well as the Confederate, and the surgeons were told to treat the one as they did the other. These orders given by me were respected on every field.

Q. Do you think that the good feeling on their part toward the rest of the people has continued since the close of the war? A. I know nothing to the contrary. I made several efforts to exchange the prisoners after the cartel was suspended. I do not know to this day which side took the initiative. I know that there were constant complaints on both sides. I merely know it from public rumors. I offered to General Grant around Richmond that we should ourselves exchange all the prisoners in our hands. There was a communication from the Christian

Commission, I think, which reached me at Petersburg, and made an application to me for a passport to visit all the prisoners South. My letter to them I suppose they have. I told them that I had not that authority; that it could only be obtained from the War Department at Richmond, but that neither they nor I could relieve the suffering of the prisoners; that the only thing to be done for them was to exchange them; and to show that I would do whatever was in my power, I offered them to send to City Point all the prisoners in Virginia and North Carolina over which my command extended, provided they returned an equal number of mine, man for man. I reported this to the War Department, and received an answer that they would place at my command all the prisoners at the South if the proposed proposition was accepted. I heard nothing more on the subject.

Q. Has there been any considerable change in the number of the negro population in Virginia during the last four years? A. I suppose it has diminished, but I don't know.

Q. Diminished in consequence of more negroes going South than was made up by the natural increase? A. My general opinion is that the number has diminished, and for the reason you gave.

Q. Do you suppose that the masses of the negroes in Virginia, at the present time are able to work,—that there are not many helpless ones among them? A. There are helpless ones certainly, but I do not know to what extent.

Q. What is your opinion about its being an advantage to Virginia to keep them there at all? Do you not think that Virginia would be better off if the colored population were to go to Alabama, Louisiana and other Southern States? A. I think it would be for the benefit of Virginia if she could get rid of them. That is no new opinion with me. I have always

thought so and have always been in favor of emancipation,—gradual emancipation.

Q. As a question of labor alone, do you not think that the labor which would flow into Virginia, if the negroes leave it for the Cotton States, would be more advantageous to the State and to its future prosperity? A. I think it would be for the benefit of Virginia, and I believe everybody there would be willing to aid it.

Q. Do you not think that the State of Virginia is absolutely injured and its future impaired by the presence of the black population there? A. I think it is.

Q. Do you not think it is peculiarly adapted to the quality of labor which would flow into it, from its great natural resources, in case it was more attractive by the absence of the colored race? A. I do.



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